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THE INDEPENDENT

THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER 1996

WEATHER: Cold & cloudy with drizzle (BR45P) 40p

The Tabloid
Adam Mars-Jones says no to The First Wives' Club

Education+
24-page pull-out packed with higher education appointments

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British troops for Africa

Christopher Bellamy
Defence Correspondent

Britain will send a military force to Zaire this weekend as part of a multinational operation to try to stem the refugee crisis, the Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said last night.



A long tradition

When British troops go to Zaire, it will be the first deployment to that country since the conflict of the 1960s. It is part of a long tradition of British intervention, but one that is far from universally successful. In 1979, the Zulu War broke out between the British in Natal colony, South Africa, and the powerful Zulu nation. 1,500 troops were massacred at Isandhlwana, but many more were won at Rorke's Drift. In the 1890s, the British supported the Egyptians in their attempt to suppress an uprising in Sudan. In 1895, they attempted to relieve the Boer Republic of South Africa, and eventually won after committing a quarter of a million troops. In 1994, British troops were part of the UN force put into Rwanda after the genocide left at least 800,000 dead.

to be determined, the idea is to stabilise the situation and hand over to African forces after three months. The decision to commit troops follows a meeting of the Cabinet's Overseas Policy and Defence Committee (OPD) yesterday afternoon, where Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, the Chief of Defence Staff, briefed the committee. Sources stressed a force of this size would mostly comprise logistic support troops, engineers and medical staff, needed to help deal with up to a million refugees, and not combat infantry. However, there is a strong feeling that if Britain does commit a force, it has to be big enough to look after itself, even as part of a multinational - and primarily Nato - contingent.

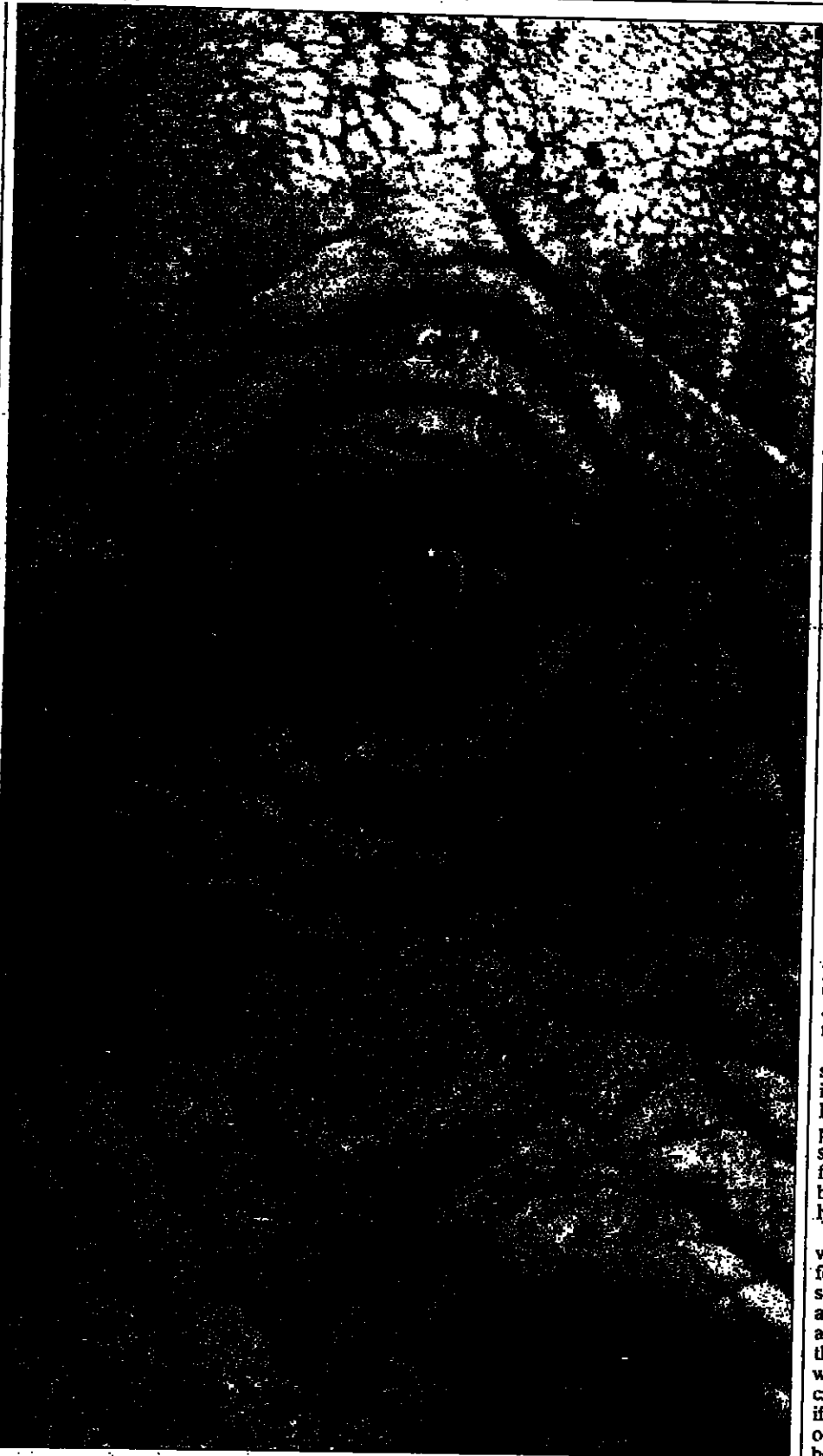
The situation in eastern Zaire is much as depicted in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, a century ago. Zaire is a vast area the size of western Europe, the east of which is populated by more than a million Hutu Interahamwe, who took part in the genocide in Rwanda in 1994; rebel Zairian Tutsis or Banyamulenge; and other armed groups.

Over the past two weeks, plans for intervention have been stalled in a vicious circle, with all the Western powers refusing to commit themselves without a clear UN mandate and a clear picture of what they would be going into. Spy satellites have proved useless in finding out what exactly is happening in the forested hills of eastern Zaire and who, exactly, is fighting whom, and where.

An estimated 1.2 million refugees are roaming the ravaged landscape. But without troops on the ground, there is no hope of finding out. Yesterday, there were reports of French planes circling over the Goma refugee camps, and that the Tutsi rebels in Zaire had fired on one, but the French denied it.

"No-one knows what's happening in the field. It's the rainy season and even American satellites are useless. Until we send scouts there, we won't know," one French officer said. Units from Britain's Joint Rapid Deployment Force (JRDF), comprising 5th Airborne Brigade, based in Aldershot, and 3rd Commando Brigade, based in Plymouth, are always on standby to move to trouble spots quickly. But until yesterday, military sources said they had seen nothing in writing.

On Tuesday, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali confirmed reports that Canada had offered to lead a multinational military force into Eastern Zaire. He said he expected more than 12 countries to make up the Canadian-led force and hoped the US would provide air transport and supplies. The US is expected to play a major role in providing transport and communications, and may provide ground troops. The Clinton administration is looking at contributing about 1,000 ground troops, administration officials said last night. Several thousand other US troops could be used in supporting roles. The White House was expected to make another statement last night. But US troops were already in Uganda yesterday, as part of a tour of the region to inspect airports and other facilities.



Traumatic cull hangs over Kruger

Nicholas Schoon

South Africa's National Parks board this week insisted on keeping open the controversial option of culling elephants in Kruger National Park after the annual shootings were suspended last year. The elephants had been shot each year since the 1960s to hold down their rapid population growth. Meanwhile, animal lovers overseas argued that there was no justification and the slaughter severely traumatised the huge mammals, the

policy has always been supported in South Africa. Now the board is reviewing its policies, trying to decide whether a population higher than the park's current 8,000 animals is sustainable and whether taking elephants out of the park to other reserves, using different last management methods in Kruger even contraception for female elephants can help. The review continues, but at a meeting with representatives of local communities, the board's Head of Research, Dr Anthony Martin-Hall, said culling must remain an option.

Soccer college for ashen-faced bosses

Ian Burrell

Football managers cracking up under the strain of coping with the media, angry supporters and difficult players, are to get professional help.

The League Managers Association is preparing an action plan to give managers training in psychology, physiology, business and time-management skills, and dealing with the media.

John Barnwell, the chief executive of the LMA, said he hoped that the football management qualification would eventually become so well-established that clubs would not hire anyone without it. He said the new course would be spread over one or

two years and would be part-time. The scheme is expected to be funded by the Premier League, Football League and Football Association, with "students" paying a nominal fee themselves.

George Silk, a psychologist whose book on football management, *I Think I'll Manage*, was published last month, said the continual publication of league tables created constant pressure.

"There are very few jobs where so many people know how well you are doing," he said. "The level of scrutiny of your every move is almost unparalleled," he said. Mr Barnwell, a former manager of six clubs including Wolves and AEK Athens, said: "The game is changing rapidly and the role of the manager has changed from even five years ago. "The manager has got to develop inter-personal and organisational skills, communication and motivational skills, they have got to learn how to negotiate a deal and how to counsel people. "We have all been ill-prepared for the job we have gone into and we are trying to ensure that future managers are better prepared."

The hole that means cancer for children

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent

Man-made damage to the earth's protective ozone layer will cause around 8,000 extra skin-cancer cases in Britain each year, according to a government panel of advisers.

These extra cases will be among people who are now children. As they go through life, they will receive an increased dose of ultra-violet light in sunshine because of the thinning of the layer by industrial and agricultural chemicals.

The epidemic will occur even though steps have been taken to curb these chemicals and allow the layer, located in the stratosphere above 40,000 feet, to begin healing itself. Scientists are now forecasting that it will be another 10 years, perhaps as long as 14, until this recovery process begins. Ozone holes will continue to open up above the Antarctic until the middle of the next century.

The estimate of 8,000 extra skin cancer cases a year came in yesterday's first report of Britain's new ultraviolet impacts review group, made up of scientists and doctors. It is the first time the Government has been given a figure for the likely harm to the population.

Dr Ann Webb, of the University of Manchester Institute for Science and Technology, said the extra cases could be avoided if people became more aware of the risks and reduced their exposure to sunshine by wearing clothes and using sunscreen. But she warned: "Even if it's a cloudy day the ultraviolet will be higher than it would be otherwise. Over a lifetime you will increase your dose."

There are estimated to be about 80,000 cases a year at the moment. This number has risen



Danger zone: The area most at risk from increased ultra-violet

markedly in recent decades, probably because of extra exposure to sunshine on holidays abroad. In 2050, this can be expected to reach 88,000, unless people reduce their exposure.

All three main types of skin cancer have been linked with ultraviolet light. About 10 per cent of cases are of malignant melanoma, the hardest to treat. It appears to be associated with intense sunshine in childhood. The report says that the lifetime risk of skin cancer for today's children will be 4-10 per cent higher because of ozone damage. The increased ultraviolet light is also expected to affect crops and animals, plankton in the sea, and synthetic materials like plastics and paints, although it is not yet possible to gauge the level of damage.

Each southern hemisphere spring for the past 15 years, most of the ozone over the

Antarctic disappears. These "ozone holes" have become deeper and wider - the layer is just now reforming over the South Pole after this year's breach - and in the past few years, holes have come close to forming over the Arctic too.

In March this year, there was a record low level of ozone in the atmosphere over Britain, and unusually high levels of ultraviolet light for the time of year were also measured.

The most important ozone destroying chemicals are CFCs and HCFCs, used in refrigeration and air conditioning, and methyl bromide used in crop storage and horticulture. Although they have been, or will be, phased out, their combined level in the upper atmosphere is not expected to peak until early next century. Next week, officials from dozens of countries meet in Costa Rica further to discuss the phasing-out process.



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news

Why beef-war poncing was put to pasture

Last summer, in the second agonies of the agricultural crisis brought about by the feeding of demented sheep to healthy cows, the Government discovered two main culprits.

They were (in order of their sins), the "right honourable lady, the member for Peckham" (Harriet Harman) - who had betrayed Britain by saying that she wouldn't care to feed beef to her children - and the perfidious Continentals. The latter, you will remember, were supposedly forced into submission by the Government's policy of non-cooperation, which preceded the Inter Governmental Conference in Florence. The ban, like previous wars, would be over by Christmas.



DAVID AARONOVITCH

Since then, ministers have fallen silent in the House. Until yesterday, when Labour helpfully tabled its own debate on the handling of the BSE crisis, and just as thoughtfully supplied Robin Cook to open it.

Malcolm Rifkind, author of the Government's strategy, was not present to defend his poli-

cies. Perhaps he felt that, having had a tiring Global Vision on Monday, it was only fair to let Agriculture Secretary Douglas Hogg be tortured to death by the Red Gnome of Livingston on Wednesday.

Mr Cook reminded the House that Mr Hogg had promised a lifting of the ban in "the back-end of the year". But, he asked, was December the back-end of the year? Or were we "looking down the front-end of another year?"

What had happened to the Policy Of Non-Cooperation in Europe (given the acronym of PONCE in the Foreign Office)? A fitting term, given the posturing involved, he quipped. It had, of course been absurd -

isolating us completely and destroying the *bonhomie* of the Danes, the Anglophilia of the French and the solid good sense of the Greeks. "Previous governments - including Tory ones - have been sensible enough to ensure that either France or Prussia was on our side".

Mr Cook must know, however, that that era has gone. There is nothing and nobody over the Channel that the governing party admires these days. If one of those aliens who keep on abducting Birmingham housewives and probing them scientifically, were to desert for a day or so and come to the Commons, he she or it would soon have a very particular view of life *sur le Continent*.

There, unemployed beggars line the crumbling pavements to watch the bloated bureaucrats (whose social chapters and minimum wages have destroyed their jobs), travel to meetings to discuss how to double-cross the British over something or other.

For instance, during Employment questions earlier, a minister had spoken of how the "French, Spaniards and Italians would be pathetically grateful" for part-time jobs, like those in Britain. We can expect the small boats, crammed to the gunwales with desperate Dons, to start arriving soon.

Europe did indeed figure when a pale Mr Hogg made his reply, which he did in a curious posture, crouching over the

despatch box, leaving only a mad tuft of grey hair, two protruding arms, and the reflection from his spectacles to be seen above it.

But Mr Hogg was no longer scourging the EU, even when invited to do so by that cantankerous old xenophobe, John Townend (Con Bridlington). Mr Townend spoke of Britain "doublecrossed over beef, as over working hours", because they "enjoy taking British export markets". But no, said Mr Hogg. The member states were "facing strong internal pressures... they do not appear to be in a position to agree to a rapid lifting of the ban".

So what on earth was the PONCING for?

Beef ban to stay, admits minister

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

The Government admitted last night that there was no prospect of getting the export ban on British beef lifted for the foreseeable future, as it faced a tight Commons vote on a Labour motion deploring its handling of the crisis.

Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, told gloomy Conservative MPs: "We are not going to get from the member states an absolute guaranteed timetable leading to dates when the ban will be lifted."

Northern Ireland MPs - whose votes are critical while the Government has a majority of one - reacted with dismay after Mr Hogg admitted that ministers had not yet tabled "detailed working papers" to try to secure a lifting of the ban for certified BSE-free herds, fed mainly on grass, in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Mr Hogg said other European Union countries were

"facing very strong internal pressure from their consumers and from their farming unions, not to agree to a rapid and substantial lifting of the ban."

"And therefore it seems to us probably that the best way forward is to concentrate on the specialist herds and possibly on cattle born after 1 August."

Robin Cook, Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, who mocked Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, for failing to speak for the Government in the debate, challenged Mr Hogg over the Government's failure to secure a lifting of the ban by this month - as promised by the Prime Minister after the Florence summit in June.

Mr Hogg found himself interrupted repeatedly by disbelieving Tory backbenchers, many of whom were not rebels and not likely to vote against the Government, but whose obvious despair sapped morale on the Tory side of the House of Commons.



Sequel: Actor Sir John Mills admiring the English Heritage plaque he unveiled yesterday at 54 Eaton Square in central London. Vivien Leigh was best known as Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind*. Photograph: Kevin Lamarque

Ministers subvert Kent blight inquiry

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

A ministerial plan to influence a Commons inquiry into the Channel Tunnel Rail link, and deprive thousands of blighted victims of compensation, was exposed last night.

Labour MP Brian Sedgmore said a leaked letter from the Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, showed a clear intention to deny compensation to people whose homes had been blighted by the long-running rail-link saga.

The letter reveals a proposal to exert political pressure on the all-party select committee that considered the rail link legislation.

The *Independent* has learned that the letter was the subject

of embarrassing, closed-door exchanges between MPs on the select committee in October last year.

The committee was warned that a formal complaint of Contempt of Parliament would be made against Sir George, for consideration by the Speaker, unless he provided guarantees that he would not attempt to "nobble" the committee.

He provided that assurance, and the matter was dropped. But Mr Sedgmore said last night: "This is a contempt of Parliament, and an attempted fraud on the thousands of residents who live on or near the planned route of the line."

"That contempt lies at the heart of Government because no fewer than six Cabinet ministers were involved - the cir-

culation list even included Michael Heseltine, Tony Newton, Leader of the House, and Chief Whip Alastair Goodlad.

In the letter, Sir George reported to William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, that select committee recommendations delivered in July last year had added an estimated £150million to the cost of the £3billion rail link scheme.

"Where it has reached decisions or made recommendations which go to the protection of private affected interests, these carry special weight; we could not set them aside lightly."

He told Mr Waldegrave that in those circumstances, it would be "prudent" for himself and John Watts, the railways minister, to intervene.

The plan was to "indicate" to the Tory chairman of the Committee, Sir Anthony Durant, and his Tory deputy, Irvine Patrick, "that it would not take much more than the costs already added by the committee to tip the Channel Tunnel Rail Link project towards non-viability."

"Kind words are due for Sir Anthony's handling of the committee, but not for the indulgence of the committee's decisions north of the Thames," he said. And in a clear reference to the political pressure faced by the Tories, he added: "Our supporters in Kent cannot be too happy."

Sir Anthony was in Paris and unavailable for comment yesterday. Sir Irvine did not return *The Independent's* call.

Jobless fall cheers Tories

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

A big drop in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit last month brought the prospect of the jobless total falling below 2 million in good time for the election.

The boost this prospect gives its re-election hopes delighted the Government yesterday. During the six months before the 1987 election, when the economy was at a similar stage of its cycle, the Conservatives improved their lead in the opinion polls by 12 percentage points, according to Mori.

John Major yesterday predicted that unemployment

would fall further. "You cannot guarantee falls of that sort every month. But that the trend is going down and is continuing to go down over the months ahead, I don't think there is any doubt," he said.

The Labour Party said the figures lacked credibility when one in every five households of working age had no-one in a job. The continual pressures on JobCentres to reduce the number of unemployment benefit claimants also means that the headline figure understates true joblessness by around 150,000 compared with the definition of official statisticians would prefer.

However, Labour will struggle to make much electoral mileage out of the unemployment figures at a time when the jobs market is so buoyant.

The introduction of the Job Seekers' Allowance delayed the processing of new claims and exaggerated the fall of 40,800 in the number of claimants in October, to 2,030,000, by up to 15,000. But even adjusting for that distortion, the figures painted a convincing picture of an improving jobs outlook.

The drop in unemployment last month was widespread. The jobless rate fell in all regions, with the biggest declines the South-east, London, the North-west, Northern Ireland and the West Midlands. The Scottish unemployment rate

fell to its lowest for 16 years and in Northern Ireland to the lowest for 15 years. It fell for both men and women and for all age groups. Long-term unemployment also declined.

Other figures showed that employment in manufacturing industry jumped by 13,000 in September to return to its highest level for four years.

The latest statistics for employment across the economy show the number in work rose by 210,000 in the year to August. Women's employment increased more than men's, and most of the new jobs in the 12 months were part-time.

Interest rate fears, Business, page 20

significant shorts

Student guilty of stalking lecturer

A mature student stalked her former university lecturer, making his life a misery in a two-year vendetta, after her sexual harassment claims against him were disproved, a High Court judge ruled yesterday.

Eileen McLardy was ordered not to "molest, harass or stalk" Dr Robert Fine, not to go within 200 yards of his home and to pay £5,000 damages to the senior lecturer for the "stress and strain" she had caused him.

The court had heard a "catalogue of complaints" from Dr Fine that he had been constantly harassed and followed by Mrs McLardy and could no longer enjoy his home, his job, go swimming or walk his dog. Mrs McLardy, 50, had claimed all the incidents were coincidences and that Dr Fine was guilty of harassing her.

Hospital suspends four nurses

The Royal Bolton Hospital, Lancashire, where health workers two months ago called for emergency management, has suspended four nurses after the death of a 20-year-old patient. An internal inquiry was launched last Friday when Michael Stocks, a recovering drug addict, was found dead.

The incident follows a catalogue of problems in Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust. In September, the health workers' union, Unison, called for an independent public inquiry into the management and provision of mental health services after an auxiliary nurse, Shaun Darrock, was accused of suffocating an elderly patient. They also called on the Health Secretary to establish emergency management arrangements in the interim to restore public and staff confidence. Louise Jury

Foster heads capital project

The architect Sir Norman Foster yesterday won a competition to produce plans to make the tourist centre of London more "consumer-friendly". With a team of consultants, he will spend a year talking to everyone from tourists to taxi drivers who use some of the best-known parts of the capital.

He will submit suggestions for improving pedestrian and public transport access in and around Trafalgar Square, Parliament Square, Whitehall and Westminster Abbey. Half of the £250,000 project has been paid for by lottery money. It was commissioned by Westminster City Council, in conjunction with the Department of National Heritage.

Man 'drank to excess'

Liver tests on a company executive showed "wildly excessive" drinking during a week-long business convention in Monte Carlo, the Queen's former physician, Sir Anthony Dawson, told the High Court yesterday.

Sir Anthony was giving evidence for company physician Dr George Kaye, in his defence to a damages claim by TV sales executive Peter Baker, for alleged breach of his duty of care to make a proper medical assessment of him when he applied for the £45,000-a-year post as head of international sales with NBC Europe in 1991.

Mr Baker, 53, of Great Bookham, Surrey, was headhunted for the NBC post and resigned from his existing job, only to be turned down at the last minute on the basis of Dr Kaye's assessment that he was a "spree drinker" whose thought processes could be blunted by excessive alcohol.

Ulster tuned to Channel 5

Channel 5 yesterday announced plans for returning thousands of homes in Northern Ireland.

The channel begins work on 5 January in an operation covering about 350,000 homes. Households supplied by the region's Black Mountain transmitter will receive a letter explaining the process.

Cannabis couple freed

A chronically ill middle-aged couple who smoke cannabis grown in their greenhouse were conditionally discharged by Bristol magistrates yesterday.

Keith Fordham, 51, and his wife Ruth, 49, smoked the illegal drug to combat pain they suffered from their illnesses. Both are on a daily dose of pills. Mr Fordham has a crumbling spine, asthma and emphysema. His wife has had cancer and has chronic arthritis.

The bench ordered that the couple, from Craydon Road, Stockwood, Bristol, should each pay £22 prosecution costs after conditionally discharging them for a year on their admission of cultivating the illegal plants. The British Medical Association currently has a working party investigating the therapeutic aspects of cannabis. It is expected to report next year.

£46,000 paid out by Met

The Metropolitan Police was forced to pay a man £46,000 damages yesterday. A jury made the award to Jerry Smith, 31, after accepting he was wrongfully arrested. Scotland Yard will also pick up costs estimated at £50,000. Mr Smith of Clapton, east London, claimed to have suffered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder since his ordeal seven years ago. He claimed he had been kicked, punched, and racially abused at the hands of five officers. Jason Bennett

Eurostar to offer 'miles'

The high-speed Channel Tunnel Eurostar company yesterday launched a form of "rail miles" to reward frequent business travellers.

Passengers who often fly can cur advantage of airlines' "air miles" programmes, with stored miles put towards an eventual free flight.

Now, Eurostar, which operates 186mph services to Paris and Brussels from London's Waterloo Station, has opened a similar scheme to all customers who buy a return ticket or two single tickets in first or business class services. Eurostar also unveiled its new executive lounge, The Clubhouse, at Waterloo. It was officially opened by designer Sir Terence Conran.

BARRY NORMAN WALKED OUT ON MADONNA AND WHY NOT?

In this week's Radio Times, read about Britain's longest running film critic.

How De Niro wanted to punch his lights out, and what happened with Madonna.

RadioTimes

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news

Why should costs deprive Samuel of a safe treatment for his illness?

Susan Emmett

Five-year-old Samuel does not flinch when doctors inject the plasma-based treatment he needs to fight haemophilia.

It is his father, Kevin Farnill, who worries that Samuel is not getting the best and safest treatment and that is why they will both be attending a tribunal in London today that challenges a decision to impose value-added tax on a purer, artificial clotting agent.

Doctors agree that recombinant Factor VIII, a genetically engineered clotting agent, is purer and safer than the plasma-derived agent and preferable for treating children.

But it costs twice as much as the plasma-based treatment and a decision by Customs and Excise to impose VAT on the product this summer made it even more expensive for hospital to use.

Dr Christopher Raper, the consultant haematologist who treats Samuel at Kingston General Hospital in Hull, Humberside, said the treatment was too expensive to use at the hospital.

"It's disgusting," said Mr Farnill. "I cannot understand why they are not giving recombinant to everybody. It's the common sense approach."

Mr Farnill and Samuel, his only son, have travelled from Hull to attend the tribunal along with other families from around Britain.

They hope to see the decision to impose VAT reversed, making it cheaper and increasing their chances of getting the treatment.

Mr Farnill fears Samuel is at risk of catching diseases such as Hepatitis C from the blood-based product that he receives. But his greatest worry is that the clotting agent might contain viruses yet to be identified.

Around 3,000 out of 5,000

haemophiliacs in the country have been infected with Hepatitis C and two viruses, Hepatitis A and parvovirus are resistant to all sterilisation techniques. "I wish I could say 'don't treat him,'" he said. "But at the time when you take him to hospital, he is in agony, you have no choice, you just have to hope."

The Haemophilia Society says VAT is another obstacle preventing children from being treated with recombinant.

"I hope that they will take off the VAT," said a spokesman. "That will remove one barrier. It will not guarantee that it will be brought in but it will help."

Dr Raper said the artificial treatment was an advance and should be encouraged, especially among haemophiliacs who have not had treatment or are only occasionally treated, as in Samuel's case.

"I look forward to the day when all haemophiliacs will be on recombinant Factor VIII," said Dr Raper.

He added: "It is up to the manufacturers and the government to bring the prices down. In three to four years the cost will come down."

The decision in the tribunal hinges on whether recombinant Factor VIII can be classified as a blood product. Human blood, plasma-derived clotting agents, organs and milk and their products are exempt from VAT.

The human plasma-derived Factor VIII accounts for more than 90 per cent of the clotting agents used by the National Health Service. Haemophiliacs cost the NHS about £40m to treat annually and some doctors say the bill would double if recombinant Factor VIII was provided for all.

More than half of Factor VIII used in Germany is recombinant and a similar level of use is reported in France.



Decision day: The life of Samuel Farnill, 5, could depend on the outcome of today's case Photograph: David Barr

NHS plan attacked as waste of money

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

The shadow health spokesman Chris Smith yesterday attacked the Government white paper on the NHS as "an abuse of civil servants' time" and a pre-election stunt aimed at boosting the profile of the Health Secretary, Stephen Dorrell.

"There is nothing in this White Paper of any real significance, no legislative proposals at all," he said. The document, costing £170,000 of the health budget, was a "blatant piece of electioneering material".

Mr Dorrell denied allegations that he was painting a rosy picture of the NHS which clashed with the reality of bed shortages, cancelled operations, and a looming financial crisis in hospitals this winter.

Mr Dorrell said the white paper, called "A service with Ambitions", was intended as a vision of the NHS of the future. It was not intended to deal with "difficult short-term issues", he said, which will be tackled by the announcement of an extra £500 million after the Budget.

It was dismissed as being "full of good intentions signifying no new policy" by Liberal Democrat health spokesman, Simon Hughes.

But the white paper does give a clear vision of the way the NHS could develop.

It commits the Conservatives to funding the NHS from taxation, and insists that it is "affordable". But the limited resources available from the taxpayer will be allocated according to priorities.

Three working parties will be set up to investigate ways of providing more information for the patient, the development of health teams to break down barriers between hospitals and GP surgeries, and ways of measuring effectiveness of treatment.

Under the white paper,

patients and their GPs could be given league tables listing the most successful and least successful hospitals and consultants according to outcome of treatment.

The effectiveness of treatment will be one of the priorities for allowing care on the NHS. Health service managers may decide that some treatments are too expensive and not likely to be successful. Fertility treatment, may be ruled out on the NHS by managers, unless their success rate improves.

In reality, patients are already finding that the "national" health service is no longer offering the same cover across the country. Mr Dorrell said there was no "blanket" ban on IVF on the NHS but in some areas IVF is available on the NHS, in others it is not because of its cost.

Hospitals are going deeper into the red, in spite of a statutory requirement to break even at the end of the financial year. They are hoping to make ends meet this winter with the promise of more money next year.

Figures by Hugh Bayley, a Labour MP and expert on health economics, show that the deficit of eleven trusts doubled during 1995-96 from £10.8 million to £19.4 million.

The Mid-Anglia community trust deficit rose from £44,000 to £119,000 in 1995-96; East Anglia ambulance service went from £68,000 to £998,000 deeper into the red; the deficit of the Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital escalated from £826,000 to £3.5 million.

Other increases in deficits included the United Leeds Teaching hospitals, which rose from £334,000 to £6.9 million; Swindon and Marlborough, increased from £522,000 to £1.02 million; and Greenwich which rose from £2.8 million to £4 million.

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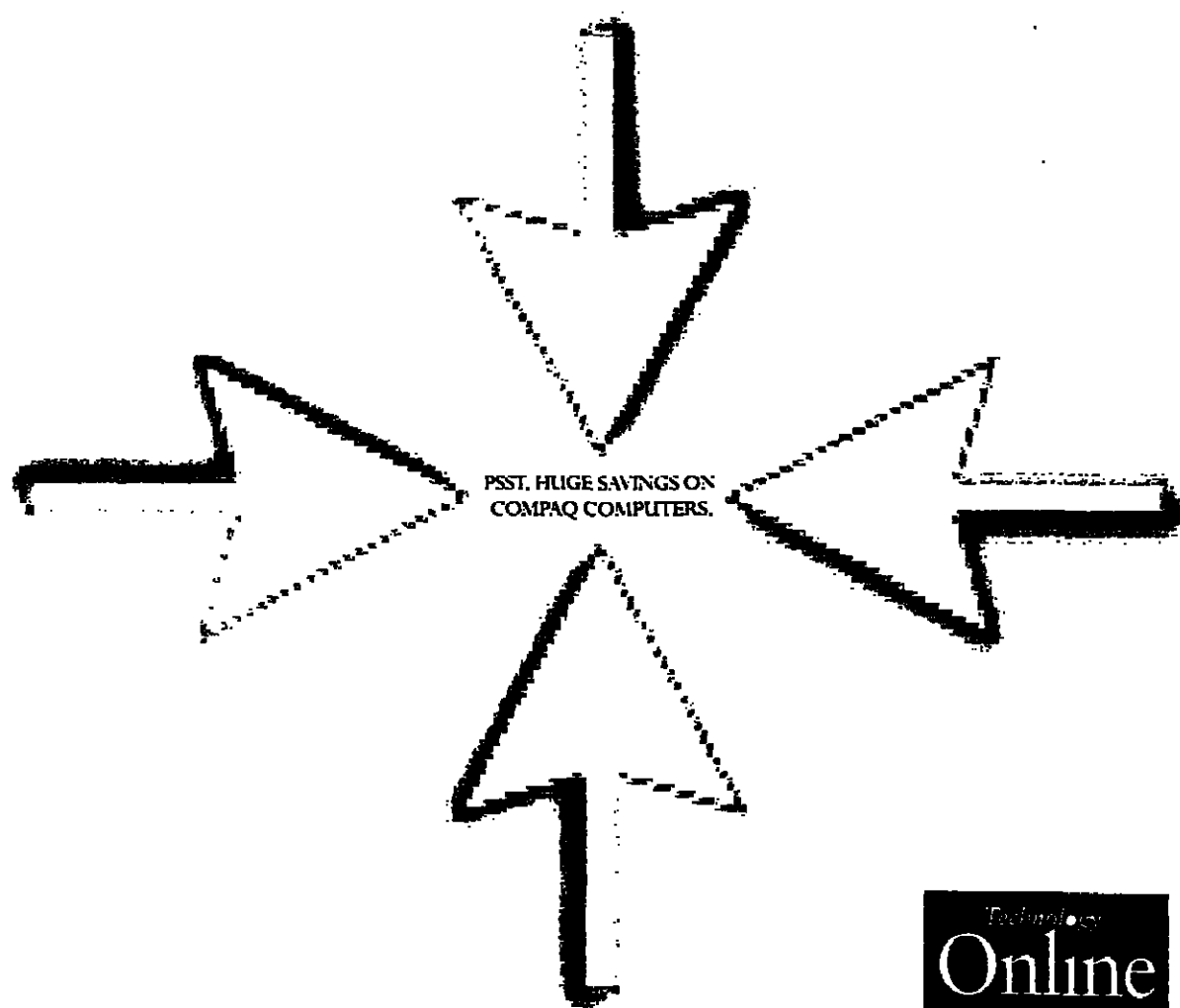


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Blue pencil for sex and violence in BBC code

Marianne Macdonald
Media Correspondent

In response to what it said was a shift in moral values the BBC yesterday cracked down on gratuitous sex and depictions of violence in its new producer guidelines.

The ring-bound booklet is supposed to be a bible for producers, advising on contentious issues, but the launch served a dual function in assuring the government that the corporation was reflecting its moral concerns. Last week Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, criticised the amount of sex and violence on television. In a letter to the BBC she expressed particular concern about the emphasis on crime.

Some will see the guidelines as a victory for the Mary Whitehouse school of morals and as part of the corporation's bid to win an increase in its licence fee. A significant extra injunction warns: "For each of us, sexual activity happens after moral decisions have been made; its portrayal, therefore, should not be separated from recognition of the moral process."

Guidelines on violence have also been toughened. Producers are told not to concentrate unduly on the bloody consequences of an accident or terrorist attack, to avoid close-ups and not to show the dead unless there are compelling reasons for doing so.

The guidelines say there are almost no circumstances in which it would be justified to show an execution, a shift from those issued three years ago, which said there were "very few" such occasions. The wording is a rebuff for Martin Bell, the foreign correspondent, who has argued that news programmes are sanitising wars by not showing the true horror. The booklet says: "Editing out the bloodiest scenes need not result in a sanitised version of events. A good script is vital in conveying the reality of tragedy."

The section covering swear words has also been strengthened to make their use more infrequent.

"Deep offence will... be caused by profane references or disrespect, whether verbal or visual, directed at matters which are at the heart of various religions," the booklet warns.

"Blasphemy is a criminal offence in the UK."

In the latest guidelines the election is a key issue and the lessons learnt from the disastrous reliance by the media on inaccurate polls during the 1992 election have not been forgotten.

"There is no area of broadcasting where the BBC's commitment to impartiality is more closely scrutinised than in reporting election campaigns," the booklet says.

"The failure of voting-intention polls at the 1992 general election called into serious question the methods used by pollsters to estimate voting intentions... Until it is clear that [they] are more robust, the BBC will maintain a sceptical approach to polling."

Will Wyatt, chief executive of BBC Broadcast, said the toughened framework was a response to a perceived hardening of public attitudes about violence — although not about sex.

"Our audiences are not so fussed about the depiction of sex, but I think there's always been a concern about violence and that doesn't go away," he said.

Drama heavyweights attack BBC 'dilution'

David Lister
Arts News Editor

Some of the biggest names in British drama have joined forces to attack the director general of the BBC, John Birt, accusing him of diluting BBC drama "for commercial expediency."

Playwrights Harold Pinter, Alan Ayckbourn and Willy Russell; Ray Galton, the co-writer of *Hancock and Son*; the *Dad's Army* creators David Croft and Jimmy Perry; comedienne Victoria Wood and TV dramatists Jack Rosenthal and Alan Plater have

all signed a letter condemning Mr Birt's reorganisation plans.

Writing on behalf of the Writers' Guild of Great Britain they say: "If the range of voices on the BBC is diluted for commercial expediency, the country will be the poorer. The BBC will have lost its distinctive remit, there will be no need for the licence fee and public service broadcasting will be dead."

John Birt announced last week the most radical programme making change in the BBC's history with the main aim of merging radio and TV programme-making. A new single bi-media 'drama department'

will be responsible for output as diverse as *Casualty*, *EastEnders*, *Saturday Night Theatre* and *The Archers*. It will initially be headed by Alan Yentob, the former controller of BBC1.

The writers complain, in a letter to *The Guardian*, that this involves a division between the editorial, commissioning and scheduling departments, and the programmes-making department.

"The main aim of the whole process they claim is 'to enable the BBC to grab the commercial pickings of digital broadcasting... The emphasis is on delivery rather than content.'"

Post-Modern tribute to rebel poet



Split pea: 'Rising Universe', the £100,000 statue to Shelley by Angela Conner, being installed in Horsham yesterday

Photograph: David Rose

Jojo Moyes

"He was a radical man and the council was keen to have something that reflected that," said the man from Horsham council. "I think he would have approved."

Whether Percy Bysshe Shelley, anti-Royalist, atheist, vegetarian, and legendary romantic poet, ever imagined he would be commemorated by a £100,000, 16-ft globe between McDonald's and Capital Sounds and Vision, is unclear.

But as the last pieces of the sculpture, *Rising Universe*, were finally put in place yesterday evening, the people of Horsham were not slow to pass judgment on the memorial for their town's best-known son.

"I think it's a waste of bloody money," said Burma Star veteran Harry Pearsall, 79. "I think it's a good idea in that Shelley is our famous son and, like myself, he was a bit of a rebel. But I think it's a bit too much. They should have spent the money on homeless people."

Dennis Bowcock, who had witnessed the sculpture's gradual installation over the last week, was more enthusiastic. "I think it's brilliant. I like the fact

it's a bit different. I'm not a fan of all modern art but I like this — it's better than just a statue."

A memorial less like a statue would be hard to imagine. The sculpture, by Angela Conner, stretches across 45 feet and stands 28 feet high. Six-and-a-half tonnes of water run from top to bottom, causing the "split pea" as one bystander called it, to rise and lower. Around it,

smaller "satellite globes" float in pools of water.

"We commissioned a lot of representational art and we felt that to commemorate a radical man we wanted a radical sculpture," said a council spokesman. "There's been a very good response from the public. We expected quite a reaction but we've been surprised at how well it's been received."

Horsham has been slow to commemorate Shelley, who was born there in 1792. While the West Sussex town's museum has a section devoted to the romantic poet, it has taken 200 years to forgive the man whom many traditionalists saw as a socialist embarrassment.

The unveiling of the sculpture, paid for by Sainsbury's, marked the end of a week of reconciliation, culminating in a visit by Italian officials from Lerici, where he drowned in 1822. It included the distribution of 2,500 gingerbread men to local schools (gingerbread was mentioned in Shelley's first recorded letter), along with information sheets on the poet. The Shelley Fountain Visitors' Centre will be open until 23 November to explain the poet's links with the town.

Shelley's Statue Replies

By Martin Newell

I saw a statue in a Sussex town. And as I passed I heard the thing draw breath. The poet grinned and quietly whispered down. "What? Still in trouble years after my death? Here in Horsham, home of leafy cuteness? Do they still go on about my habits?"

One frail monument to dissoluteness. And they all start up like frightened rabbits. Sometimes, the devil is a gentleman. Usually with poets it's vice versa. So therefore when he learns to rhyme and scan. He must improvise with his own cursor. Horsham, I am Shelley, can you take it? Horny, atheistic starting at you. Hope that HG Wells is next to make it. Horsham Heath deserves a Martian statue."

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news

Councils' fraud bills soar as gangs move in

Christian Wolmar
Westminster Correspondent

The amount of fraud detected in local government has doubled over the past two years, according to Audit Commission figures published today.

The commission says there is mounting evidence that organised crime is moving in on local government.

Some gangs have set out to defraud many councils. Attempted rackets include invoices being sent for professional organisations to which councils do not belong. Nigerian gangs obtaining bank account details to attract funds and landlords claiming on behalf of non-existent tenants.

The value of detected fraud has increased from £34m in 1993/4 to £69.5m last year. The number of cases has doubled from 83,000 to 166,000.

The commission, the local-authority watchdog, stresses that much of the increases result from better detection methods, in particular the use of computers to prevent housing-

benefit fraud. It points out that for the past two years councils have been rewarded with more government grant when they detect fraud.

The commission says it is unable to estimate the total amount of fraud in Britain's 400 councils and wants more to be done to prevent and detect it.

The commission has been working with a group of local authorities to increase detection, particularly of benefit rackets which accounts for 79 per cent of the value of fraud.

Andrew Foster, commission controller, said that a £600 computer program could save 100 times its cost in a year. "All councils should use these programs," he said. One racket detected by the program is fraudsters using a false identity in all 33 London councils to claim housing benefit at empty houses in each.

There is very little detected "insider" fraud. All but 1 per cent of the fraud uncovered by auditors relates to the public, rather than staff, attempting to steal from local authorities. Only 21

cases of corruption were detected in 1995/6 compared to 57 in the previous year, but the commission accepts that "corruption remains difficult to identify and to prosecute successfully".

One area where fraud has increased is in student grants. The amount of detected fraud has risen from just over £1m in 1993/4 to £5m. One woman made claims in respect of five deceased members of her family. When her home was raided, it was discovered that she had 60 birth certificates, 17 marriage certificates and 14 British passports.

The commission criticised local authorities for failing to take sufficient care over cheques. One borough lost £40,000 after thieves intercepted and altered a cheque.

Mr Foster said: "There are safe ways of transferring money through computers. Issuing big cheques like this is ridiculous in this day and age."

Protecting the Public Purse: Ensuring probity in Local Government, Audit Commission, £6.

Labour calls for court action if children are out of control



Laying down the law: Labour says delinquency will grow unless action on effective parenting is taken.

Photograph: Hulton Getty

'Help bad parents,' says Straw

Patricia Wynn Davies

More education in parenting and a national telephone information service for parents in difficulty would be developed under a Labour government, Jack Straw, the shadow home secretary, said yesterday.

Mr Straw and Janet Anderson, shadow minister for women, said in a discussion document that unless the subject of parenting was tackled, delinquency and crime would grow. "If we are not prepared to do

this then we are doomed to spend more on police, security, insurance, courts and prisons," the MPs say in the paper, which cites studies showing the link between defective early childcare and delinquency.

Mr Straw said it was "no good just lecturing parents for being lousy parents. We have also got to have intervention as well."

The document outlines the scale and difficulty of the task, saying that while the "roots of offending" lie in parental attitudes, defining parental re-

sponsibility is almost impossible. It notes that in government Labour would encourage the expansion of locally-developed parenting programmes.

Labour would ask the proposed Qualifications and National Curriculum Authority to examine how parenting lessons in schools could be organised and consider how resources could be better used to develop a telephone information service and guidance material on parenting and sources of help but makes no promises

about extra money. A new "parental responsibility order" should be available to the courts where it is clear that parental attitudes and behaviour are a key factor in a child's offending. Parents would then have to attend sessions. Mr Straw later urged people not to castigate single parents, saying that he had been one of five children brought up by a single mother in Essex. He said: "The worst thing that happened to any of us was that I became an MP." New Labour, new nanny, page 18

Major sacks rebel Dicks for support of total gun ban

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

John Major today will meet parents of the victims of the Dunblane tragedy but will resist demands for a free vote in the Commons on a total ban on all handguns.

The Prime Minister yesterday underlined his determination to impose discipline on the government "payroll" vote by sacking Terry Dicks, 59, as a ministerial aide for supporting the Dunblane campaign.

The sacking of Mr Dicks as parliamentary private secretary to John Watts, a junior Transport minister, was condemned by Labour's spokesman on Scotland, George Robertson, as a "brutal and insensitive warning" to other MPs that a victory on a partial gun ban mattered more than conscience or principle.

"It is a sickening irony that Tory MPs, including Cabinet

ministers, can achieve a free vote on caving in breaking ranks, but a humble parliamentary private secretary is sacked for exercising his conscience on gun control," Mr Robertson said.

Urging John Major to respond to the Dunblane parents' plea for a free vote, he said: "There is still time for the Tory party to save its reputation."

Mr Major was accused of acting "in a juvenile manner" by Alex Salmond, the Scottish National Party leader. "This is a clear sign of Major's petulance and abject fear that the case for a complete handgun ban is now winning the argument," he said.

About six Dunblane parents are expected to make their case to Mr Major at the meeting, immediately after Prime Minister's question time. But a Downing Street spokesman played down any chance of the Prime Minister changing his approach to

the Firearms Bill and allowing a free vote next Monday.

Mr Dicks is one of the most outspoken right-wingers in Parliament. A strident supporter of tough law-and-order measures, including the return of capital and corporal punishment, he backed the police on a total handgun ban. He said: "I am sorry the Government acted in this way. I have no regrets: first Hungerford, then Dunblane - how many more people have to die before effective action is taken to deny private ownership of handguns and other weapons?"

He knew he risked being sacked from his unpaid post. He is now free to vote with other Tory rebels, led by David Mellor, the former Home Office minister.

On Tuesday night 31 Tories voted against the Government on the second reading of the Bill. Some Tories said another 30 abstained. Voting for the rebel Tory amendment were: Robert Banks (Harrowgate), Spencer Baines (Eli-

Body (Holtam with Boston); Sir Andrew Borden (Brighton Kempdown); Ian Bruce (Dorset S); Nicholas Budge (Wolverhampton SW); John Carlisle (Luton N); Weston Churchill (Dorchester); Michael Colvin (Romney and Walsley); Christopher Gill (Luton); Sir John Goss (Hendon N); Sir Anthony Grant (Cambridgeshire SW); Sir Archibald Hamilton (Epsom and Ewell); Sir Alan Haselhurst (Saffron Walden); Andrew Hunter (Barnsley); Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith (Walsley); Michael Jopling (Westmorland and Lonsdale); Dame Elaine Keirton-Bowman (Leicester); Tim King (Bridgwater); David III Knight (Edinburgh); Iain Mills (Meriden); Sir Stanley Oaker (Woking); Roderick Richards (Croydon NW); Sir Trevor Smart (Bedfordshire N); Peter Viggers (Gosport); John Whittingdale (Colchester S and Malden); Sir Terry Wigg (Weston-super-Mare); Ann Winterton (Conington); and others. Tory Markov (Northampton N) and Rupert Allason (Ripley). Also for the amendment were three Labour MPs - Frank Cook (Stockton N); Dr John Gilbert (Dudley E); David Young (Bolton SE) - and three Ulster Unionist MPs - Roy Beggs (Austin E); William Ross (Londonderry E); John Taylor (Strangford).

Smith's widow enters Parliament

John Rentoul
Political Correspondent

Baroness Smith of Gilmorhill, the widow of the late Labour leader John Smith, was appointed yesterday to the party's front bench in the House of Lords.

Her appointment was part of a last minor reshuffle, as Lord Richard, Labour leader in the

Lords, readied his team for a constitutional showdown with hereditary peers if Tony Blair wins the election. The former Elizabeth Smith has become a Labour spokeswoman on tourism. Since her husband's death two-and-a-half-years ago, she has kept a low profile, apparently resisting any move into any official position within the party.

But Lord Ewing, who clashed with the Labour leader over its handling of plans for a Scottish parliament, has left the front bench.

Meanwhile, Lord Strathclyde, the Conservative chief whip in the House of Lords, confirmed that his party would not block the ending of speaking and voting rights for hereditary peers. In a letter to Lord

Carter, a senior Labour front-bencher, he confirmed that the Tories would abide by the "Salisbury Convention" - the Lords would not stand in the way of a manifesto pledge of a party which won a general election. But Tory sources made it clear that the progress of the Bill to remove the rights of hereditary peers "would be slow".



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Voucher schools cram children into huge classes

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Local authorities are cramming young four-year-olds into large reception classes which are not equipped to cope with them, says a report on the first independent evaluation of the Government's nursery voucher scheme.

The report on the pilot scheme in four local authorities says the Government is misleading parents by talking about nursery vouchers: the scheme is more about four-year-olds starting school early than about nursery education.

Some schools in the pilot authorities have changed their admissions policies to secure more voucher money.

Yesterday, Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, said that her officials had written to all local authorities asking them to consider whether reception classes are the right place for young four-year-olds.

Ministers say the pilot has been highly successful with more than nine out of ten parents receiving and redeeming vouchers. In Norfolk, they say, 800 new local authority places have been created, plus 285 private and voluntary ones. Westminster has plans for 1,000 new places in the next three years.

Parents of all four-year-olds will be eligible for £1,100 vouchers from April next year.

Mrs Shephard said: "Vouchers give parents a real choice. They take purchasing power away from bureaucrats and place it squarely in the hands of parents."

But the report from early

Education + in The Tabloid

childhood expert Gillian Pugh says: "There is very little evidence as yet of parents exercising their choice differently from how they would have done before – indeed some are feeling pressurised by schools to send their children to school when they are just four."

Mrs Pugh says the burden of administration for the scheme, which costs just under £10 per voucher. "There is a strong feeling of time wasted which could more profitably be spent on educating children."

Local authorities in the pilot scheme have been given extra money for administration which will not be available when vouchers are available nationally.

Mrs Pugh's report says it is too early to answer many of the questions about vouchers but points to the fact that while there

has been some expansion in the number of places in Norfolk, some playgroups have closed, and a further 22 fear they will.

Yesterday, she criticised the Government's letter urging local authorities to reconsider plans to put young four-year-olds in reception classes and to work with private and voluntary groups. "Ministers cannot have it both ways. If this scheme focuses on parental choice then the marketplace is one in which providers must compete. It is at odds with the spirit of the scheme for the Secretary of State to tell people to work together."

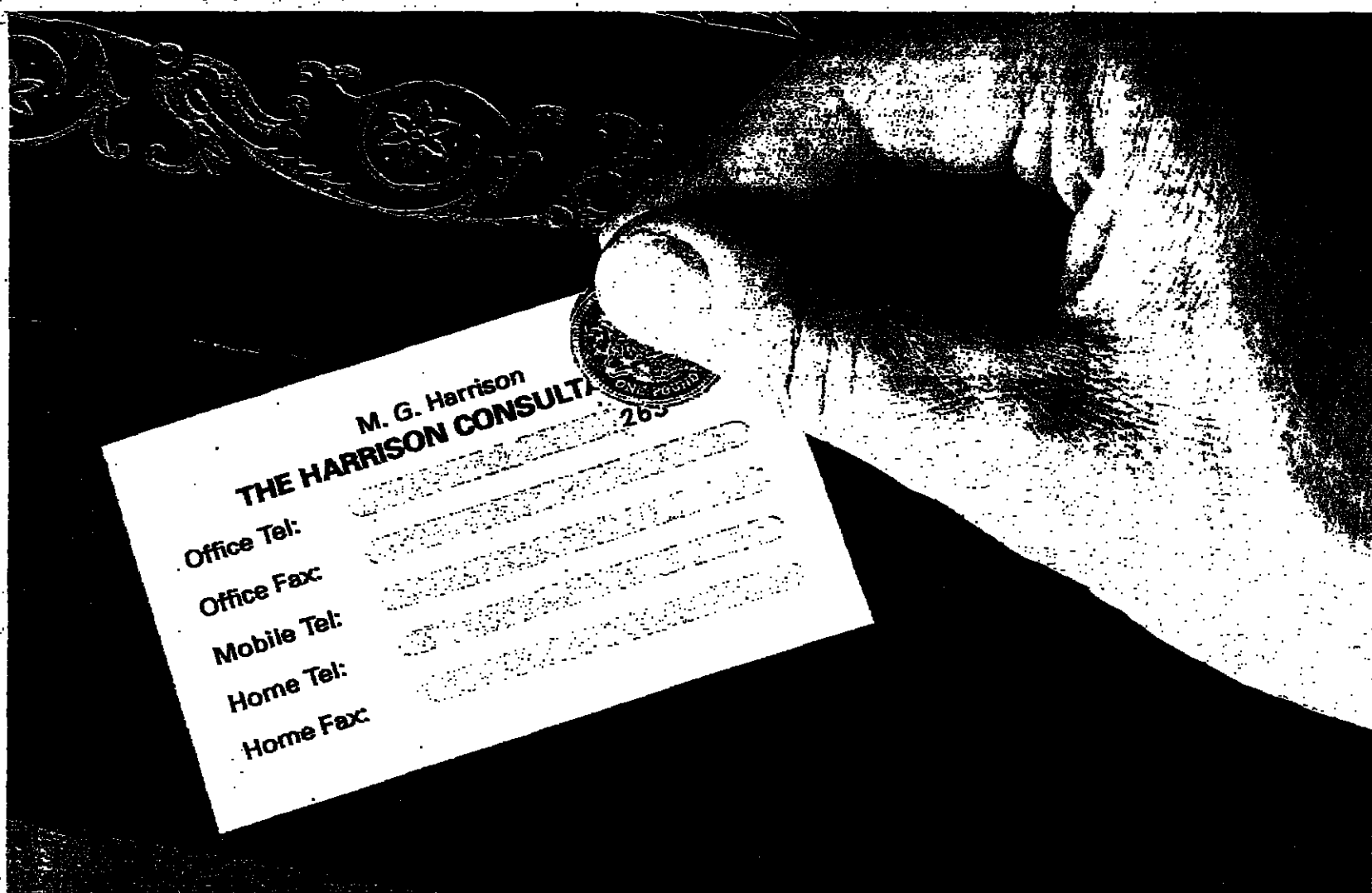
Mrs Shephard announced a £650,000 advertising campaign to publicise the £750m scheme. The helpline set up on Monday has already received 6,000 calls.

Silver show adds finishing polish to museum's new look



An 18th-century chess piece which features in the newly refurbished Silver Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The galleries opens on 27 November and covers aspects such as stylistic development of the metal and hallmarked. Photograph: John Lawrence

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DAILY POEM

The Windhover

By Gerard Manley Hopkins

*I caught this morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in
his*

*riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding
High there, how he rang upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and
gliding*

*Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
Stirred for a bird, – the achieve of it, the mastery of the thing!*

*Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
Buckle! AND the fire breaks from thee then, a billion
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!*

*No wonder of it: sheer plód makes plough down sillion
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion.*

Two years after completing "The Wreck of the Deutschland" Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote some of his best-known poems, including "The Windhover" and "Pied Beauty". In this time he was preparing for ordination and religious conviction fuelled sensory experience and visions of ecstatic intensity. For all this his poetry was underpinned with rigorous technique. His "sprung rhythm", the stress is provided by accents rather than by syllables, harked back to medieval verse but his stabbing use of words and vivid imagery he pushed new boundaries. Hopkins's *Selected Poems* are available in Oxford World Classics at £3.99.

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news

Once the front line against the Luftwaffe, now it's Howard's front line on crime

Jason Bennett
Crime Correspondent

A former Royal Air Force base is to be converted into a makeshift jail and police cells that cost £300 a night are expected to be used to house inmates under emergency plans to deal with the prison overcrowding crisis.

Richard Tilt, the director general of the Prison Service, admitted yesterday that the system was at bursting point. There are 58,000 prisoners in England and Wales, and there are expected to be more than 60,000 by next March.

The disclosure came as Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Prison Inspector, warned in his first annual report that overcrowding and lack of resources were the most severe problems facing the penal system.

The base at Finningley, near Doncaster in South Yorkshire, is due to house 300 low-risk category C prisoners from January, but the figure could rise to 900. The Prison Service has taken the site on an 18-month lease from the Ministry of Defence but Mr Tilt said it could be purchased outright. It is planned to build a security fence around the base, which until a year ago was used to train navigators and engineers. In the Second World War it was a bomber base.

Mr Tilt also admitted that police cells may have to be used to house inmates during the next few weeks. A committee of MPs has already condemned this practice pointing out that they cost more than a night at the Ritz hotel. In addition, in the next fortnight the first prefabricated

overcrowding huts will be opened. Up to 720 offenders could eventually be accommodated in this way. "We are just about at the limit of our capacity and we are managing by moving prisoners around [the country]," Mr Tilt said.

About 10,000 prisoners now have to share cells as inmates increase by 1,000 a month in response to the clampdown on offenders by Michael Howard,

Five died at prison affected by drugs

Staff at the only women's jail in Scotland, where five inmates killed themselves in a 15-month period, were overwhelmed by the number of prisoners with drugs problems, said a report published yesterday.

So severe was the problem that three in four of the 50-plus women in the remand block of Cornton Vale prison, near Stirling, were under observation for medical reasons or because they were considered suicidal.

Clive Fairweather, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland, said: "The conditions in this [remand] wing were not unlike a mixture between a casualty clearing station and a psychiatric ward."

The scale of the challenge posed by drugs and drug-related problems was shown by the number of medical prescriptions for the prison: 2,670 in October 1993, 3,198 in October 1994, and 5,528 in Octo-

ber 1995. The drugs in most common use were cannabis, Temazepam, heroin, and Temgesic. Drug-induced epileptic seizures were common among women on remand.

In his account of conditions in the remand wing Mr Fairweather said: "Many were frail and undernourished, one woman I saw could hardly get up off her bed to take a puff of her bag."

He said that in the short-term more use could be made of community service orders and in the longer run more use could be made of drug addiction clinics as an alternative to prison. He noted that long-term bail hostels could be used as an alternative for low-risk prisoners on remand.

Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland, said he would consider the recommendations on bail hostels and psychiatric screening by courts.

at the Home Secretary. Mr Tilt said overcrowding would be eased over the next 18 months by 7,000 places in new prisons and building in existing ones. He said the Government had allocated an extra £85m to the problem.

Meanwhile in his annual report Sir David warned: "The most severe problems facing the Prison Service are shortage of money and the danger signs that overcrowding, and the associated

evil of inactivity, are doing real damage to all the progress that has been made over the past four to five years."

The Prison Service pre-empted one of Sir David's recommendations by announcing yesterday the setting up of a new unit to look at the interests of women and young offenders.

Sir David acknowledged that overall conditions and treatment of prisoners were notably better than they were during the Eighties. But he said it was important not to let inmates slump into idleness, expressing particular concern about cuts to work and education programmes - a fear recently expressed by two former Home Secretaries Douglas Hurd and Kenneth Baker.

He also described morale in the Prison Service as "fragile". Prisons minister Ann Widdecombe defended the Home Office policy, saying that the most severe problem was the number of people being sent to jail and the need to accommodate them on the day they were sentenced.

"We have made money available twice in the last few months to address the problem," she told BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*.

Shadow Home Secretary Jack Straw said: "What the Chief Inspector of Prisons report illustrates is Michael Howard's failure on law and order - his failure to deal with the ever-rising tide of crime and his failure effectively to manage the Prison Service."

The chairman of the Prison Governors' Association, Chris Scott, added: "We should not allow this slow drift back to poor conditions."



Role change: The Prison Service has taken an 18-month lease on the former RAF base at Finningley and plans to move inmates in from January.

Photograph: Ross Parry

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Young artists take a winning leaf out of Britain's history book



Stephen Goodwin
Heritage Correspondent

The future of Britain is green – if the results of a children's painting competition are anything to go by.

The National Trust's Painting Places competition challenged children to paint a favourite site which they would love to

see saved for the future, and nearly two-thirds of the 12,000 children who entered those stretches of coast or countryside.

Many of the children, aged between 4 and 15, added an explanation of why their favourite site was so special.

Winners of the competition, which is sponsored by the Yorkshire Building

Society and supported by the Vivien Duffield Foundation, will be announced today on BBC television's children's art programme, *S'Mart*. Their prizes will include National Trust gift vouchers and CD-Roms.

A selection of the winning entries will be displayed on the London underground and Metro rail networks in Tyneside and Manchester.



New bridge computer will deliver ultimate grand slam

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

First draughts, chess shortly — and now bridge? Computers could soon be world-beaters in yet another board game, according to scientists devising a new generation of programs intended to vanquish humans.

However the news, which might at first cause the game's estimated three million players in Britain a deal of fear, is not that bad. It will probably be 20 or 30 years before a bridge-playing computer is world champion, according to Professor Alan Bundy, of the artificial intelligence department at Edinburgh University.

"Present commercial bridge programs play pretty amateurish games," Professor Bundy said, "especially compared to chess programs, which in a few years will probably be the best players in the world." He thinks bridge programs now are at the point that chess programs were in the early 1970s.

Whereas most club players can easily beat the best commercial bridge programs, last February the chess world champion Garry Kasparov lost a game in standard competition to the IBM computer Deep Blue. He won the six-game match but faces a rematch

next May. A computer became world draughts champion in 1994. A backgammon program beat the then world champion in a game as long ago as 1970, though analysis showed

The problem computers have with bridge is that there is "incomplete information" about the game, unlike chess where all the pieces are in view. Although

there are far fewer possible combinations for the 52 cards – 10^{14} , compared to 10^{120} moves in a chess game – the fact that most of the cards are hidden at the start complicates the process hugely.

Even after bidding, through which humans deduce much about the cards, a player only knows the position of half the cards. "One way to take it is to use abstraction," said Professor Bundy, a keen player. "You take away the detail about the cards, and you work at a higher level." The program devises a strategy to win tricks with each suit and forms an overall plan.

Other bridge programs, being developed separately in Maryland and Oregon in the US, also work less like number-crunching computers and more like humans. Matthew Ginsberg, of the University of Oregon, has devised one that guesses what cards the opponents are holding. The Maryland one aims to lose the fewest tricks given the cards visible.

tricks given the cards visible. Alan Williams, manager of the English Bridge Union, has no fears that interest in the game will diminish, even if a world-beater does eventually turn up. "A lot of people like playing bridge for the feel of the cards - and to meet people."

Leading article, page 17

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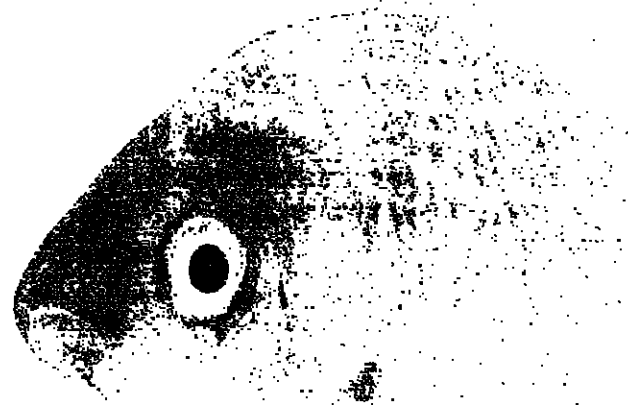
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international

Rebels fire on aircraft and threaten the French, suggesting intervention force may get a hot welcome

US joins effort to get aid to Zaire refugees

Rupert Cornwell
Washington
Mary Dejevsky
Paris
Mary Braid
Kampala

The Clinton Administration, bowing to intense international pressure, announced late last night that it would take part in a multinational humanitarian relief force in Zaire.

But the signs on the ground were that the military situation in eastern Zaire may present a stiff challenge to the force, especially if France is involved. Zairean anti-government rebels yesterday fired at a plane, suspecting that it was French.

After several days of discussion the United States seemed ready to announce its participation - the step that would turn the force from an idea to a reality.

Details will be worked out after a report from a Pentagon team in Uganda to assess the refugee situation. Major-General Edward Smith, commander of the Southern European Task Force, and a 40-strong team, arrived in Kampala yesterday.

They are expected to visit South-west Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania and possible centres in eastern Zaire for the humanitarian operation.

Washington was expected to be ready to contribute up to 5,000 troops, with the prime mission of securing the airport at Goma and providing equipment and logistical support. Hitherto Washington has been insisting that any United Nations operation to help the hundreds of thousands of trapped Hutu refugees must have a tightly defined mission to avoid any repetition of events in Somalia in 1993, when more than a dozen American soldiers were killed.

Momentum for a force is now building rapidly and a UN security council meeting to formalise it is expected imminently. Canada has said its first troops could be deployed within 48 hours of a UN resolution. President Nelson Mandela said he is prepared in principle to contribute South African troops to an international force but wanted more specific information. Spain has put troops on alert and the

Netherlands is expected to discuss sending troops in a parliamentary debate today. Ireland has said it will provide troops if asked. Belgium, Zaire's former colonial ruler, has ruled out troops but has offered to help with logistics and money.

The disclosure that the US was already engaged in the region, even to this tentative extent, came amid a flurry of diplomatic activity in France, where the idea of an intervention force was launched. Hervé de Charette, the French foreign minister, was due to have dinner with Warren Christopher, US Secretary of State, in Paris yesterday and a decision was expected to be announced afterwards.

France also disclosed yesterday that it was already engaged in an airborne reconnaissance mission in the region. The French defence ministry said its purpose was to assess the feasibility of landing and protecting large consignments of aid. It said that airfields on the Zaire-Rwanda border were too small and unsafe and that airports in Uganda and the

Central African Republic were being considered.

But the presence of France in the force continues to create considerable antipathy in Africa, where it is seen as being partly responsible for the crisis in Rwanda in the first place.

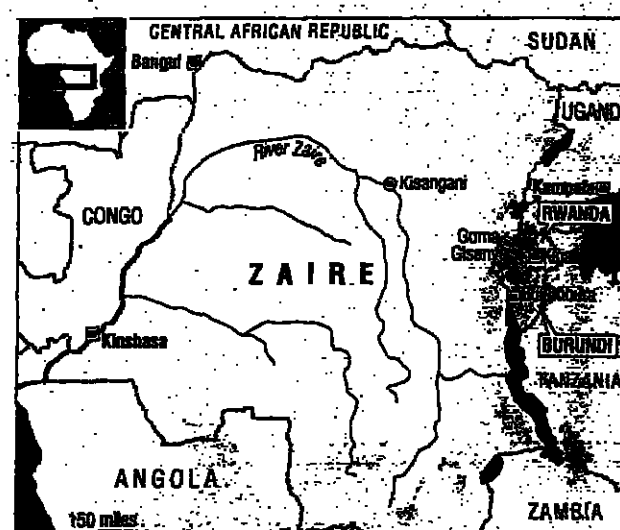
Yesterday rebels in Goma fired at a plane, saying they suspected French troops were on board. Aid workers later resumed distribution of supplies but it was an ill omen for any

outside intervention.

"It is a signal of what things could be like if we want to mount a major operation in Goma," said Michelle Quintaglie, a UN World Food Programme spokeswoman.

France's neutrality is also compromised by the presence in his villa on the Riviera of President Mobutu, the leader of Zaire. He arrived from Switzerland last week where he had undergone an operation for prostate cancer. In a brief television interview on Tuesday he appealed for international aid for the million or so Rwandan refugees stranded in eastern Zaire but gave no indication that he intended to leave France soon, insisting that he was still convalescing.

Rwanda has said that French troops should not take part in any force. Its president said yesterday that foreign intervention in Zaire would get "messy", like previous outside military operations in Africa, unless Zairean anti-government rebels were consulted. "To the best of my knowledge the United Nations has not consulted the people controlling eastern Zaire. But in order for this operation to work they must secure the airports of Uvira, Bukavu and Goma," said President Pasteur Bizimungu.



Rwanda and the rebels accuse France of a secret agenda to restore Zairean authority in the east and help the Hutus whose flight to Zaire in 1994 was aided by French intervention.

"If French troops arrive in Goma... we will fire on them and resist them," said Andre Kasasbe, Zairean rebel commander said.

There were also indications that the fighting is spilling over national boundaries. Uganda said yesterday that it

killed three Zairean soldiers after they attacked two border posts, backed by Zaire-based Ugandan dissidents.

Martin Aliko, Minister of State for International Co-operation, said Uganda had repulsed the "enemy" and the Zairean soldiers and Ugandan dissidents retreated into Zaire from where they shelled Ugandan positions all day.

He rejected suggestions that Zaire was targeted by Uganda because of its support for anti-government Zairean rebels.

Shadowy rebel force holds key to outcome

As the outside world reluctantly inches its way towards creating an international peace-keeping force to save a million Rwandan Hutu refugees, the rebels who have broken up their camps in eastern Zaire remain a mysterious force.

That has not stopped western governments planning great hopes upon them. The diplomats' ideal solution would have been the rebels' speedy dispatch of the thuggish Interahamwe, the Hutu militias which incited their people to genocide against their Rwandan Tutsi countrymen in 1994, then led them into the UN refugee camps of eastern Zaire where they were remoulded into one great collective cash cow to fund attacks across the border.

But the Interahamwe is proving more of a match for the rebels than the unpaid, corrupt Zairean troops who fled at the first sign of trouble. It continues to manipulate and intimidate its people, now holding hundreds of thousands of hostages near Goma, as a shield against all enemies, including, presumably, any outside force.

Diplomats are still trying to get a measure of the rebels "but we just don't know who they are, how well they are equipped or where they are being funded from", said one Western diplomat dispatch to Kigali. "We're in the dark."

There are persistent rumours that an international network of expatriate Tutsis - particularly strong in Canada and the US - helped fund the successful war by Tutsis, exiled in Uganda, against the Hutu-led Rwandan government in the early 1990s.

That network is now said to be supporting Zairean Tutsis - the Banyamulenge - which the Zairean government holds responsible for the rebellion in eastern Zaire. The Banyamulenge, the Zairean government claims, are backed by Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda because they have designs on its territory.

Efforts to assess the balance of power are being frustrated by lack of information. Mary Braid reports

It bases this regional conspiracy theory on long-standing connections between Laurent Desire Kabila, one of the rebel leaders, Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda, and Paul Kagame, Rwandan Deputy President and former military commander of the army that won Uganda for Museveni.

But the Banyamulenge Tutsis, while they appear to have been the main players in the insurrection's first success in South Kivu, are not the only force. It is not even certain that they dominate what appears to be a coalition of at least four po-

The rebels might win with time, but time is something the refugees are sadly lacking

litical groups linked by one factor: a hatred of President Mobutu, who has presided over the complete collapse of Zaire during a 31-year rule.

Kabila, who leads the rebels Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, is not even a Tutsi. A Marxist and life-long successionalist, he comes from the mineral-rich Shaba province and fought against Mobutu in the 1960s and in the Shaba uprisings in the 1980s.

In a giant and teetering country, which encompasses at least 250 ethnic groups, Shaba and neighbouring Kasai already operate independently of Kinshasa.

Among the rebel soldiers patrolling Goma this week are many non-Tutsis from Shaba, Kasai and Haute Zaire, north of Kivu. Many speak perfect English and some even admit they picked up their language and military skills in the same place - Uganda.

Kabila denies receiving help from Rwanda or Uganda. But journalists and aid workers saw Rwandan soldiers in Goma. Refugees fleeing the conflict say guns flooded in and rebel groups seemed to swell before the insurrection began.

Rwanda has most likely taken advantage of the internal discontent in a collapsing country where money is literally worth less than the paper it is printed on. At the very least, Kagame must be delighted to see the Hutu threat removed from his doorstep, the rebels providing a buffer zone, and the international community at last forced to act. It is hard to believe that such a brilliant military strategist had nothing to do with this outcome.

Whatever the shape of the international force which eventually arrives in eastern Zaire, it seems unlikely that it can rely on the rebels to make its greatest problem - the Interahamwe - disappear. The rebels might win with time, but time is something the refugees are sadly lacking. The Interahamwe stands between aid and the dying.

The international community now faces the problem it shirked two years ago when aid agencies warned of disaster if the Hutu extremists were not separated from the refugees. It was always going to be a difficult task, but it will prove impossible if those sent to do the job are deprived of the right to use force.

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Banished: Award in a gallery as leaders squabble over author's invisible enemy

Cowering Danes blow their Rushdie cover-up

Imre Karacs
Copenhagen

Salman Rushdie swept into Denmark yesterday but did not quite make it to Europe's capital of culture. Terror-stricken Copenhagen had closed its gates, banishing the author to a suburban art museum, where he was due to be presented with the EU's prestigious Aristeion prize last night.

Streets in the vicinity were barricaded by armed police, the country's frontiers were guarded with extra vigilance, and beards were subjected to

Tuesday the time and venue was announced by the government, only to be promptly declared secret by the police. To get to the "secret" location, journalists had to rendezvous with a "secret" bus which would pick them up in the centre of Copenhagen, equipped with special security passes that should have been obtained by last Monday. Secretly, however, the passes could still be garnered yesterday afternoon. "Please don't tell any other journalists," a helpful government official pleaded. The police were already very annoyed about the visit.

The forces of law and order had decreed that they were far too busy fighting Hell's Angels and Bandidos, the rival biker gangs which have lately been swapping their chains for rocket-propelled grenades in their war over the Scandinavian turf, for the distraction of Mr Rushdie.

Under pressure from the police, the Justice Ministry had told Mr Rushdie, in effect, that he was *persona non grata* in a country which he has visited several times since the *fatwa* was declared. Actually, they did not inform the author in person. The Danes communicated the news via the good offices of Britain's Foreign Office.

"It is scandalous," Mr Rushdie retorted, "that Copenhagen, the present capital of culture, refuses to permit the winner of the European Union's own literature prize to attend the ceremony. It is a cowardly decision, which is exactly the opposite of what one should do in the face of threats such as the Iranian *fatwa*."

Denmark was the first European country Mr Rushdie visited after the death sentence, and Scandinavian governments have been loudest in condemning the Tehran regime. While the dispute has mystified the public in the rest of Europe, in Denmark people were outraged in Denmark by

No entry into the culture capital: Salman Rushdie said after being refused entry to Copenhagen, 'It is a cowardly decision which is exactly the opposite of what one should do in the face of such threats as the Iranian *fatwa*'. Photograph: Geraint Lewis

their government's cravenness. The Prime Minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, had no alternative but to admit that the affair had become a fiasco and generously took the blame upon himself. That and the U-turn narrowly averted a no-confidence vote he would have been certain to lose. But fury is still raging in parliament. Today will see a full debate on the issue and on relations with Iran, and the coalition will only be sustained by reluctant left-wing opposition parties which do not want to be

seen to be voting with the opposition on the right. Mr Rushdie was awarded the prize for his latest novel, *The Moor's Last Sigh*. Danish bikers have yet to comment on the merits of the award, or indeed to express any opinion on Islam.

The shirts were inscribed with the legend: "Wogs go quiet when our strong arm dictates. Heavy Platoon". They also featured a caricature of far-right Austrian Freedom Party leader, Jörg Haider, flexing his muscles. *Vienna - Reuters*

He had been relieved of his duties for tolerating the shirts, it said. The shirts were inscribed with the legend: "Wogs go quiet when our strong arm dictates. Heavy Platoon". They also featured a caricature of far-right Austrian Freedom Party leader, Jörg Haider, flexing his muscles. *Vienna - Reuters*

Peru quake traps miners underground

At least 40 gold miners were trapped yesterday in an underground mine in the Andes mountains after a powerful earthquake struck Peru's southern coast, killing 15 people and injuring as many as 700.

The 6.4-magnitude quake struck at midday Tuesday, damaging homes and buildings in Nazca, a tourist town of 25,000 located 235 miles south-east of Lima. Four people were killed and 380 injured there, and streets were blocked with rubble.

The quake lasted about a minute and was felt in Lima and as far away as Tacna, 600 miles south-east of the capital. *Nazca - AP*

North Korea accused of drug-running

North Korea is smuggling illegal drugs through the Russian Far East as part of desperate efforts to fight a domestic economic crisis, a senior military intelligence official was quoted as saying.

The ITAR-Tass news agency quoted the unidentified official as saying the Russians have seized several shipments of heroin and opium that were being smuggled by North Koreans. The official spoke after claims this week by a North Korean defector that Pyongyang is secretly running poppy farms nationwide to produce opium that it exports to earn hard currency. *Moscow - AP*

Greece fears Turkish threat

Premier Costas Simitis blamed the military threat from Nato ally Turkey for his decision to go ahead with a massive four trillion drachma (£10bn) arms modernisation programme.

Mr Simitis said the Greek people "will have to make sacrifices" to meet the goals of the eight or nine-year modernisation programme, which could surpass £15bn after debt payments. His announcement came as the Turkish parliament was debating a 1997 budget that includes £5bn in defence expenditure as compared to £2.5bn in 1996. *Athens - AP*

Data alarm for Estonians

Estonia is in uproar over the black market sale of personal information on thousands of citizens that was stolen from government data banks.

The Baltic News Service said Prime Minister Tiit Vahi has curbed the heads of agencies where information was leaked and promised a full inquiry. According to police, copies of government databases containing thousands of telephone numbers, corporate and vehicle data are now for sale on the black market. Such information, police say, is of particular value to organised crime. *Tallinn - AP*

Bosnia force in racism row

An Austrian army officer was recalled from Bosnia because of racist T-shirts worn by his I-For peacekeeping troops, the Defence Ministry said. He had been relieved of his duties for tolerating the shirts, it said.

The shirts were inscribed with the legend: "Wogs go quiet when our strong arm dictates. Heavy Platoon". They also featured a caricature of far-right Austrian Freedom Party leader, Jörg Haider, flexing his muscles. *Vienna - Reuters*

Protest over Tudjman veto

Croatian opposition parties decided to start a 30-day boycott of parliament and continue boycotting the Zagreb city council.

The Social Democrats allied with five other opposition parties, outpolled President Tudjman's party in municipal elections a year ago. But Mr Tudjman used his presidential veto to reject four opposition-elected mayors, arguing he could not relinquish power in the capital. *Zagreb - AP*

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Tapes point blame at Kazakh pilot

Officials blame poor English for disaster at 14,000ft

Tim McGirk
New Delhi

The mid-air plane crash over northern India, which killed 351 people on Tuesday night, may have been caused by pilot error, according to Indian authorities.

Indian aviation officials yesterday released excerpts of the taped conversation between New Delhi's control tower and the pilots of the Saudia Airlines jumbo jet and the Kazakh Airways Il'yushin charter plane which collided in darkness at 14,000ft. There were no survivors, but two passengers from the Saudi flight survived the crash, still strapped to their seats, only to die soon after of internal injuries.

The tapes, according to Indian officials, prove that both pilots acknowledged receiving instructions from air controllers to fly at varying heights. The Saudi flight, bound to Dhahran and Jeddah, was cleared to fly at 14,000ft, while the Kazakh aircraft, headed for New Delhi, was ordered to descend no lower than 15,000ft.

"We've had bad experiences with these pilots from the former Soviet Union," said one senior official at Delhi airport. "They don't speak English very well. When we ask them to repeat the instructions we've just given them, a lot of times they say 'Roger' and then turn off their radios."

In the transcript, the Kazakh pilot reports in at 15,000ft and is told: "Roger, maintain level 150 [15,000ft]. Identified traffic 12 o'clock reciprocal. Saudi Boeing 747, 14 miles. Report in sight."

The Kazakh pilot: "Report how many miles?"
Control tower: "14 miles now. Roger. Traffic in 13 miles, level 140 (14,000 feet)."

A minute later the controller watched, horrified, as two green blips on his radar converged and vanished off the radar screen.

Indian air controllers also complained that pilots from the former Soviet Union sometimes confuse their calculations because they are accustomed to using the metric system to calibrate altitude and distances,

while all other countries use nautical miles and feet.

However, according to one air consultant, Rashid Jung, "plane crashes occur not because of one error but because of many factors". Searchers picking through the smouldering wreckage of the two planes, which crashed to earth six miles from each other, yesterday located the two black boxes which may reveal more details.

Some airline experts claim that over the past three years, New Delhi's air traffic has increased by 20 per cent, and the control tower is often left to juggle take-offs and landings with

Residents swore the Saudi pilot averted a worse disaster by steering away from villages'

out-dated equipment. Some experts suggested that New Delhi's approach radar unit lacked sophisticated monitoring devices, common now to most international airports, which not only track an aircraft but also give its exact altitude.

It is also common practice for controllers to route incoming and outgoing aircraft along different "lanes" in the sky. But because of the Indian air force's stringent controls over civil air traffic, the western route into New Delhi - connecting the capital to the Gulf and Europe - serves for aircraft that are both taking off and landing.

Relatives of the crash victims arrived at the dusty village of Charkhi Dadri yesterday, 60 miles west of Delhi, to try to identify the remains of their loved ones. It was a gruesome, thankless task. Most of the Saudia passengers were Indian workers, but there was one Briton - Karen McCoy, 26, from Birmingham.

Karen's father, Michael, 55, speaking from the family's home in Northfield, Birming-

ham, said his daughter had gone to work in Saudi Arabia as a nurse 13 months ago. She had written home to her father and her step-mother Enid, 63, also a nurse, just a month ago to tell them she was planning a two-week holiday in India.

Mr McCoy said: "When I saw it on the news I just knew that she was on board. We rang the airline but they could not confirm the passenger list but then the police called at 11.30pm last night and told us that she had gone through customs."

Aside from such things as a shoe or a wallet strewn in the wreckage, there was nothing left to identify the bodies. Even still, the mangled relatives wandered through the debris with sheets and pieces of cloth to drape over the scattered remains. None of the police or searchers had bothered with such decorum.

Local residents said they were sure the pilot of the jumbo averted an even worse disaster by steering his blazing aircraft away from their villages.

The United News of India quoted witnesses in a nearby village as saying the aeroplane turned away from their houses just before it crashed.

"I strongly felt that the pilot tried to save the people," Karan Singh, was quoted as saying in Dahni Phabot village. "We had a miraculous escape."



Villagers survey the wreckage of the Saudi Boeing 747 which collided near Delhi on Tuesday with a Kazakh cargo plane, killing 351. Photograph: AFP

Fears grow in a bad year for aviation safety

Christopher Bellamy and Elizabeth Wine

Flying is still the safest way to travel, but 1996 has been one of the worst years ever for air crashes. Tuesday's crash over India that killed more than 350 people is the fifth air disaster in a month, the twelfth this year and the tenth involving Western aircraft. The death toll is more than 1,700 this year - nearly 1,200 in Western-built aircraft: the grimest for air safety in over a decade. "It's turning into a very bad year," said Mike Reed, of Airclaims, a London-based loss adjusters.

Many pressures bode ill for airline safety including the increase in traffic, which leads to aeroplanes flying closer together in the skies. The number of aircraft flying has increased steadily in the last decade. The number of Western-built jets has increased from 7,097 in 1986 to 11,425 in 1995. In other words, we have the makings of a traffic jam in the air with no shoulder to pull over on to.

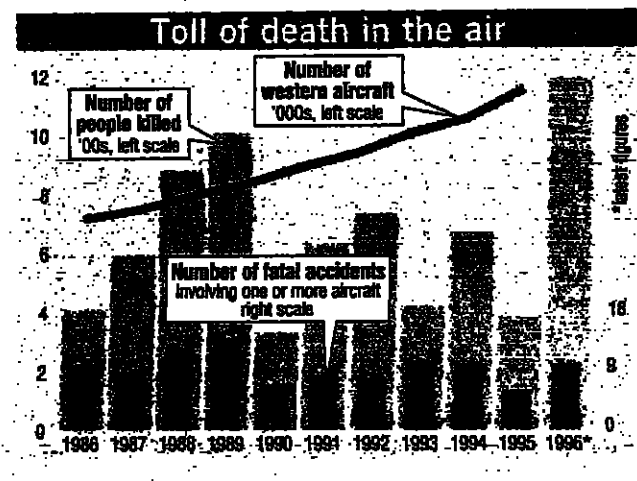
Suggestions are being floated to narrow the vertical space between aircraft from 2,000ft to 1,000ft. Tests are being conducted at 29,000ft over the North Sea this year to determine if 1,000ft is safe enough. A decision is expected from aviation authorities early next year. The two aircraft which collided in India were told to close to 1,000ft for reasons as yet unclear, it was not enough.

The number of fatal accidents has not increased as fast as the number of aircraft. But the number of deaths this year, 1,187, has been by far the worst since 1985, when there were 1,537.

Another reason suggested for the high number of air accidents is the advanced age of some planes being flown. Many of the poorer nations in the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union have aircraft much older than the 20 or so years that

most experts prefer. Proper maintenance can extend the life of aeroplanes but there has been some question as to the level of maintenance in such countries.

Another worrying aspect of lies in the lack of expertise in air traffic control and equipment in countries in Africa and Asia. Such nations lack the money for all the proper equipment and training for air traffic controllers. Many airports lack the people or the hardware to guide planes down safely, leaving the pilots to guide themselves. Global positioning systems telling the pilots exactly where they are will help, but they are not yet universal.

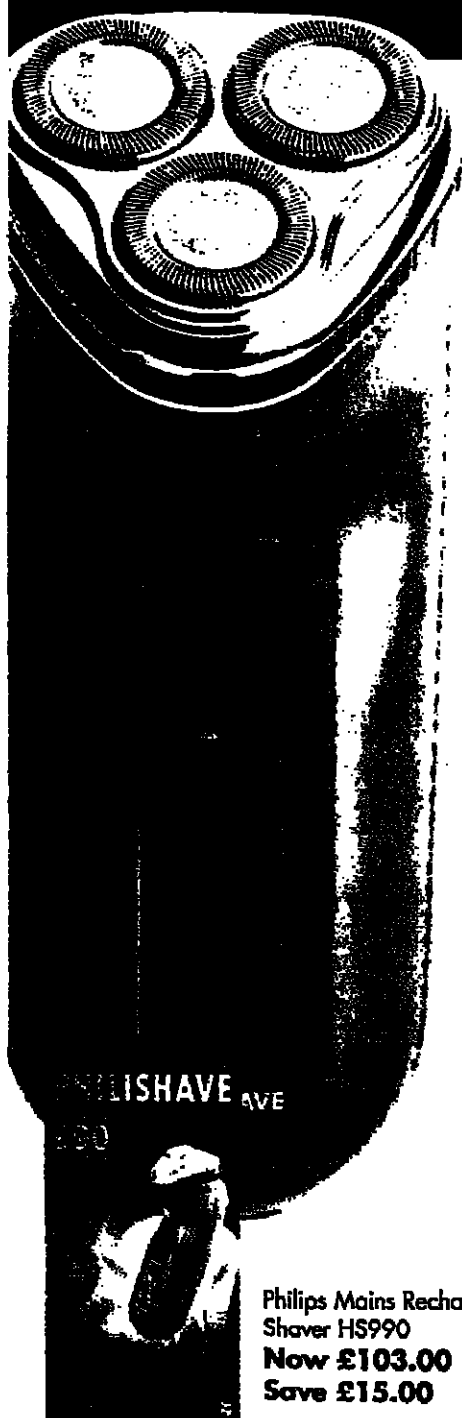


Carolyn Evans, technical secretary for the British Air Line Pilot Association, said one of her main concerns is the lack of uniformity between the communication systems of aircraft in the former Soviet Union. The communication radar systems, called transponders, "talk" to each other and signal vital information to pilots, without the crews having to talk to each other. The problem, according to Ms Evans, is that former Soviet transponders don't "talk"

to the rest of the world's aeroplanes and are not fully visible on air traffic controllers' screens. This means that procedural, or non-radar control, is then necessary. Additionally, the former Soviet aeroplanes' altimeters are calibrated in metres, while the rest of the world uses feet. This could have the reason behind Tuesday's catastrophe. Ms Evans said BALPA had lobbied the Civil Aviation Authority to standardise the equipment.

A system that could make aircraft safer should they find themselves in air space outside the reach of radar control towers will be mandatory in the UK by 2000. The system, called Airborne Collision Avoidance System, is already mandatory in the United States. It would make it possible for one plane with the system to be able to communicate with another plane that did not have the system as long as it had a transponder.

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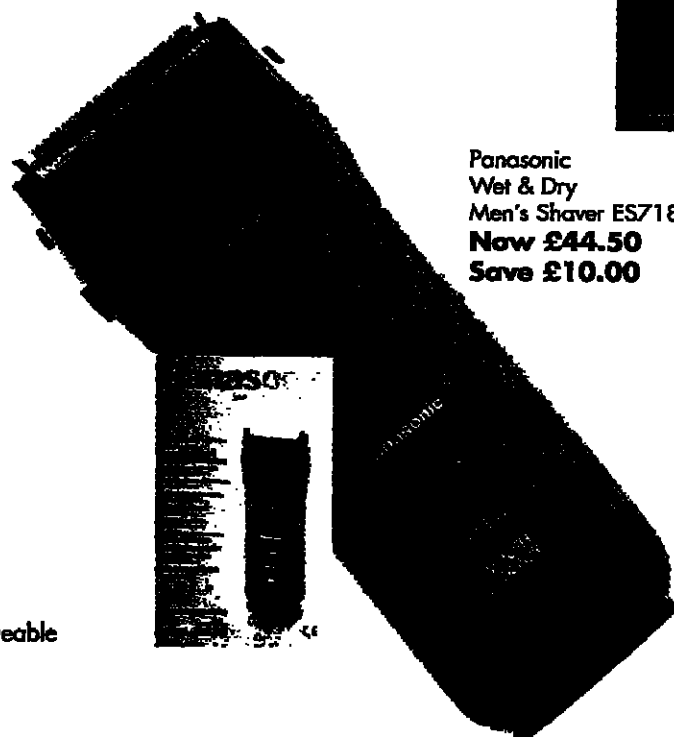


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IN THIS WEEKEND'S
INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Veterans of Vietnam weep as the girl who became a symbol of suffering comes to forgive 22 years later



Reconciliation: Phan Thi Kim Phuc after addressing the veterans in Washington. Photograph: Dennis Cook/AP

David Usborne
New York

In the photograph album of the 20th century, one picture more than almost any other will best evoke its most tragic futility: a nine-year-old girl running naked from a napalm drop in the Vietnam War, arms outstretched in terror. Now, thankfully, we have one more image for the collection: it, by contrast, will stand for man's capacity for courage and forgiveness.

The subject in both is Phan Thi Kim Phuc. She was the child who, on a June day in 1972, was caught by the shattering of Nick Ut, an Associated Press photographer. She was fleeing after a direct hit from a napalm bomb dropped by a South Vietnamese plane on the orders of an American commander. In the picture's left foreground is her brother. Two other brothers were already dead.

Ms Kim Phuc was also the woman with the open, kindly face, who on Veteran's Day last Monday stepped through the crowd assembled at the Vietnam Wall in Washington DC to lay a wreath. Now 33, a wife and a mother, the girl who became the symbol of America's folly had come to its very heart, not to stir its guilt but to help it learn from the horror.

"I have suffered a lot from both physical and emotional pain," she told the crowd of veterans at the Wall. "Sometimes I could not breathe, but God saved my life and gave me faith

and hope. Even if I could talk face to face with the pilot who dropped the bombs I would tell him, 'We cannot change history, but we should try to do good things for the present and for the future to promote peace.' The veterans saw her and, to a soldier, they wept."

The story that ensured that Ms Kim Phuc survived to be more than just the girl in the picture began when Mr Ut himself, who won a Pulitzer for the shot, took her burning body to a military hospital. She was treated for 14 months for the third-degree burns that covered half her body, doctors rebuilding her with a series of skin grafts. Every time her skin was so much as touched she would pass out from pain.

In 1984 she was "discovered" by a Dutch documentary team and simultaneously by the Vietnam government which attempted to use her to gain international sympathy. In 1986 she was permitted to travel to Cuba to study. There she fell in love with a fellow Vietnamese student, Bui Huy Toan, whom she married. On a return flight to Cuba from Moscow, where they honeymooned, Ms Kim Phuc announced that they would get off at a stop-over at Gander, Newfoundland. The couple were granted asylum by Canada and today, with a two-year-old son, they live in a one-room flat in a suburb of Toronto.

The journey to Washington this week came about through an invitation from the Vietnam Veterans of America and the support of Shelley Soywell, a Canadian film-maker telling the story of her life.



Image of an age: The Pulitzer-prize-winning photograph of Phan Thi Kim Phuc by Nick Ut of the Associated Press

suffered - more than me," she said. "They died. They lost parts of their bodies. Their whole lives were destroyed, and nobody took that picture."

Ms Kim Phuc still suffers physically. In Cuba she developed diabetes and asthma and while her face is unblemished, beneath the clothes there is a scarred body. The skin, de-

prived of sweat or oil glands, cannot perspire. "When the weather changes, the pain comes, like I am cut, cut. I try to keep down my pain, thinking, thinking to control it. I ask my husband to tell me stories, funny stories or ask me something so I have to answer him. And that is the way I can live."

Twenty-two years after her image helped to end the Vietnam War, Ms Kim Phuc says she has plenty to be grateful for - a stable life in Canada, a loving husband and a child she thought she would never be able to produce. America has come to be thankful too - for her grace and courage in coming to Washington to offer remarkable forgiveness.

Clinton shifts ground over balanced budget

Rupert Cornwell
Washington

After a year of bitter sparring, signs are multiplying that President Bill Clinton and the Republican-controlled Congress may be able to clinch a deal to balance the federal budget well before the next midterm elections in 1998.

The clearest pointer yet came at the first post-election meeting between the President and top Republicans, at which Mr Clinton said for the first time that he could "live with" a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget - a move he previously denounced as a "gimmick" which might only serve to tie the government's hands in dealing with a recession.

In large part, of course, the President's change of tone reflects simple congressional arithmetic. When the measure last came up for a vote, in mid-1995, the White House pulled out every stop to thwart it: but

even so the amendment sailed through the House and failed by a single vote in the Senate to secure the required two-thirds majority. Now, not only have the Republicans increased their overall Senate majority, but two Democrats who opposed the measure have been replaced by ardent supporters.

And whatever its intrinsic merits, the amendment's passage would increase momentum for a budget accord in the first and invariably least confrontational year of a presidential term - following an election in which voters, by sending Bob Dole to defeat, signalled they did not believe in the major tax cuts touted by the Republican candidate.

With the tax-cut issue no longer obscuring the picture, both sides acknowledge that the gap between them is relatively small, even on the hyper-contentious question of Medicare and Medicaid, the two federal health programmes which must be reined in if the budget is to

be balanced. In the last exchange of proposals before the elections, Mr Clinton offered "cuts" of \$183bn (£114bn) over seven years, the Republicans \$253bn (£158bn). "This disagreement can be bridged," Mike McCurry, the White House spokesman, said.

Meanwhile Mr Clinton is hoping to make a start on rebuilding his Cabinet before he leaves for Asia at the end of the week, with the announcement of a new Secretary of State to replace Warren Christopher next January. The favourite is former senator George Mitchell, who has been chairing the Northern Ireland peace talks, but other candidates, notably the United Nations Ambassador, Madeleine Albright, and former Georgia Senator Sam Nunn, are in the running. An outside possibility is retired General Colin Powell, who hinted in a weekend newspaper interview that he would not turn down the job if Mr Clinton offered it.

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US gives go-ahead for laser weapon

Rupert Cornwell

A consortium led by Boeing and Lockheed has won a \$1.1 billion Pentagon contract to develop the world's first full-scale airborne laser defence system to shoot down ballistic missiles - a project described by one supporter as a military innovation equal to the atom bomb.

"This is as revolutionary as the invention of gunpowder or the Manhattan Project," Jerry King, the president of Boeing's defence division, said of the scheme, comparing it to the construction and explosion of the world's first nuclear device in 1945.

The laser guns, with a range of several hundred miles, will be mounted aboard a modified 747 jumbo jet. If all goes well, as many as seven 747s could be in service by 2003, capable of delivering intense energy beams of light that could destroy missiles like the Scuds used by Iraq in the Gulf war.

The idea is for the laser to strike during the initial "boost" phase of a missile's flight, so that the deadly payload would fall back on the country which launched the weapon. At which point a basic problem of laser beams resurfaces - their inability to penetrate clouds. "You'd better hope for good weather," said John Pike of the Federation of American Scientists.

Even so, the airborne defence concept is proof that despite much scepticism the 'Star Wars' dream has become a reality, albeit in not quite the grandiose form outlined by Ronald Reagan in 1983.

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international

Settlers ready for Hebron struggle

Patrick Cockburn
Hebron

In the Israeli military headquarters overlooking Hebron, a brown-coloured fortress built by the British half a century ago, a senior Israeli officer pointed to a thin dark line on the map which will mark the partition of the city between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

"There is friction, daily friction, all the time," said the officer, appealing for his name and rank not to be used. Most Israelis had already left the building, due to be taken over by Palestinian police after a final agreement is signed on Israeli redeployment in Hebron.

It is a peculiar type of withdrawal. "In other cities we handed over authority and pulled out," said the officer. "Here we are just going to pull back a few blocks." Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister, claimed in the election

that there was a sell-out of the 400 Jewish settlers in Hebron, but it was Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, who made most concessions.

In future, Hebron will be divided into two areas known as H1 and H2. In the former will live 100,000 Palestinians, protected by 400 Palestinian police. In the latter, protecting 48 settler families in the heart of the city, will be 1,000 Israeli soldiers and 20,000 Palestinians included in the settler enclave. Yesterday troops were strengthening their checkpoints and heaping up sandbags.

For Noam Arnon, settler leader and spokesman, this is disastrous. "We are very concerned and very frightened that the PLO police are going to take over Hebron," he said. Asked if it was not the Palestinians who had most to fear from the heavily armed settlers, Mr Arnon demanded to know "how a community of 50 men could



Time's up: A Jewish extremist being arrested in Hebron yesterday as the city prepared for partition. Photograph: Reuters

endanger 150,000 Arabs?" A few hours earlier the settlers of Kiryat Arba, the 6,000-strong Jewish settlement overlooking Hebron, had been in a more aggressive mood. Hundreds had gathered to celebrate the bar mitzvah of Ya'akov, son of Baruch Goldstein, who murdered 29 worshippers in a He-

bron mosque two years ago. Dov Lior, rabbi of Kiryat Arba, told the young man: "Follow the path of your father, he was a righteous man and a great hero."

Israeli news photographers and cameramen were abused. A man attending the bar mitzvah shouted: "If there was an abom-

inable murderer in this country it was [the late prime minister Yitzhak] Rabin. Baruch Goldstein saved Jews." Goldstein's father, Yisrael, added: "He was a hero. Everything he did, he did for the sake of Israel."

Mr Netanyahu, meanwhile, was waiting to see last night if he could leave on a holiday to

Colorado or would have to cancel because agreement had been reached on Hebron. Palestinian negotiators said they would not agree to the Israeli army entering their enclaves at will. Israel said it was a long way from agreeing a timetable for the next stage of withdrawal from the West Bank.

PEKING DAYS

Citizens mass to overthrow king rat

The invitation was hard to ignore. The fax from the Peking Patriotic Sanitation Campaign Committee welcomed observers to view the city's "mass rat-killing activity". As it was official rat-killing week in Peking, an upstanding citizen knew where duty lay.

Participants gathered early yesterday with Zhang Xizeng, vice-director of the committee; he was on hand to explain the finer points of rat extermination. He did not have statistics on the rat population of Peking because "rats don't have to register like Chinese people do", but the city's "rat density" was below 1 per cent. This meant if one placed 100 traps for 24 hours, one rat would be caught, he explained.

Peking's citizens have been mobilised against their rodent foes. In East District, there have been public viewings of the propaganda videotape, *Rat killing in Chinese cities*, and leaders of work units and enterprises have signed a "1996 winter rat-killing affidavit".

An inspection of 436 work units, 120 neighbourhood committees, and 12,311 rooms found the local rat density at a worrying 9.43 per cent. So, like everywhere across Peking, teams have been out in force, laying poison and traps at all the rats' favourite haunts - street markets, grocery stores, food processing factories and sewers. Some 100 tonnes of rat poison will be laid in the city this week.

Communist China has a tradition of mass campaigns against small creatures. In the Forties, China's four "demons" were deemed to be the rat, sparrow, fly, and mosquito. The most destructive mission was the slaughter of sparrows in 1958, at the start of the disastrous Great Leap Forward.

Chairman Mao ordered the country's population to strike up a cacophony of sound, beating

cymbals and saucepans, to keep the birds from settling. Exhausted, the sparrows fell dead to the ground. Mao had blamed the sparrows for eating grain, but ignored the fact they mostly ate flies and grubs. The result was a plague of insects.

These days the cockroach has replaced the sparrow in the "demons" line-up. In recent mass campaigns, material as well as patriotic incentives are employed. Earlier this year in Shenzhen, the booming economic zone next to Hong Kong, the authorities offered a 5 yuan (40p) reward for every rat-tail handed in. Professional rat-catching gangs set themselves up, and were soon feuding over the bounties. With rat-like cunning, it did not take long before dead rats were being shipped from the countryside into the city in order to claim the rewards. In the north-east city of Shenyang this spring, 400,000 rats were wiped out with an offer of just 1 yuan per tail.

This year's anti-rat campaign in Peking is "large-scale" compared to the city's recent annual blitzes, but Mr Zhang said no money is on offer. "It is not because the density of rats increases dramatically. It is because during the last two years, a lot of old buildings were knocked down, and this destroyed the habitat of the rats so they have no place to live." Decisive action is needed because, said Mr Zhang, we are at the point in a 10-year cycle when rats are breeding heavily.

At the Liangshifa grocery store, a red and yellow banner hung across the entrance yesterday read "Everybody participate in killing rats". Inside the shop, an assistant said the poison had been mixed with milk powder, apples and sausage "so it is more delicious for the rats".

Teresa Poole

Mexicans jail their marijuana granny

Phil Davison
Latin America Correspondent

The school children called her little granny. The media have dubbed her "the narco-granny". She is 82 and will not be selling marijuana to children for a while, as she is in jail.

Sofia Garcia could be 87 before she leaves Topo Chico federal prison in Monterrey, in the north of Mexico. The federal prosecutor's office said that while it was normally lenient with old people it was making an exception in this case because of the seriousness of the offence. Garcia was jailed without bail while awaiting sentence for "crimes against the public health". Police stumbled upon her after a raid aimed at a multi-million dollar cocaine and firearms ring. As they waited to

pounce on this gang outside Monterrey station they were distracted by the smell of marijuana from secondary schoolchildren on a platform.

The pupils, aged between 13 and 17, said they had bought their *palomitas*, or joints, from a woman they called *abuelita* (little granny).

"I'm a poor woman. My husband is sick. I've been selling marijuana all my life. I have to do this to eat," she said as she was handcuffed and taken away to the astonishment of neighbours. The children said they had paid her 10 pesos (about £1) for a cigarette. Garcia has so far refused to say where she bought the drugs. Monterrey is a haven for drug cartels. One of the FBI's 10 most wanted men, Juan Garcia Abrego, was arrested near the city last year.

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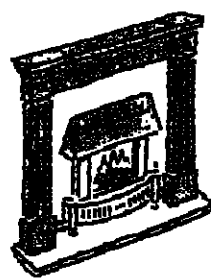
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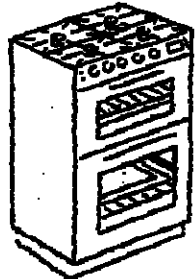
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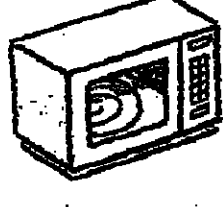
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Threat to hold on to weapons if alliance grows

Belarus warns Nato over nuclear arms

Tony Barber
Moscow

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, warned Nato yesterday that he might refuse to give up his country's remaining nuclear weapons unless the Atlantic alliance promised not to deploy nuclear arms in Eastern Europe. In a speech to the Russian parliament, the hardline pro-Russian leader said there were "slightly over a dozen" nuclear weapons left in Belarus from the Soviet era, and if Nato wanted them removed he might "demand guarantees from the West that it will not locate nuclear weapons near Belarus's borders".

Nato intends next year to invite a select group of former Communist countries in Central

and Russia's most reliable strategic partner". He said that if Nato expanded to the east, Belarus and Russia should "work jointly on an adequate response".

The two countries signed an agreement last April that created a "Russian-Belarusian community", but in practice Russia has held back from taking the decisive steps towards integration that Mr Lukashenko advocates.

He called yesterday for a joint session of the Russian and Belarussian parliaments in January that would decide on the reunification of the two states.

His speech won a sympathetic response from Communist and nationalist members of the State Duma, the lower house of Russia's parliament, who are much keener than President Boris Yeltsin's administration on reuniting Russia with some former Soviet republics.

However, 13 liberal MPs denounced the Communists and nationalists for allowing Mr Lukashenko to address the Duma.

A statement released by the group said: "By supporting President Lukashenko, who is obsessed with establishing an authoritarian regime, the national-Communist majority in the Duma has vividly demonstrated its real position on democracy and human rights."

Mr Lukashenko, criticised in the West for his strongarm rule, has called a referendum in Belarus for Sunday week to endorse his plans for extra personal powers. He wants to restart his presidential term from the date of the vote and rule for seven years without re-election. He also wants the right to appoint all senior judges, half the constitutional court, half the commission which organises elections and part of a newly created upper house of parliament.

While warmly embracing Mr Lukashenko, the Russian parliament's majority has angered Ukraine by moving closer to adopting a resolution that would declare Sevastopol, capital of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula, a Russian city and the base of Russia's share of the former Soviet Black Sea fleet.

Georgy Tikhonov, the chairman of the Duma's committee for relations with former Soviet republics, declared that if the resolution on Sevastopol was delayed,

"tomorrow it will be Nato's fleet, not Russia's, that will be based in Sevastopol".

Ukraine hit back with a warning that it would seek support from the US, Britain and France, which guaranteed Ukraine's territorial integrity in 1994 when it agreed to hand over its nuclear weapons to Russia for destruction.

The Black Sea fleet and Sevastopol disputes have prevented Russia and Ukraine from signing a friendship treaty and caused Mr Yeltsin to postpone a state visit to Kiev six times in the last two years.



Shaking the system: Emil Constantinescu, leader of the centrist bloc who won Romania's general elections, greeting supporters after a live television debate with the incumbent president, Ion Iliescu, ahead of Sunday's second round run offs. Photograph: Reuters

The Book of the Year -Out Now

Heart of Britain

HEART OF BRITAIN is an amazing portrait of life in Britain in 1996, captured in hundreds of extraordinary photographs taken by ordinary people.

In a single week in July - Heart of Britain Week - thousands pictured the way we live, love, laugh and cope with life today.

Now the very best of them have been gathered into a beautiful hardback book you, your friends and family will treasure.

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All photographs were sent in, with a donation, to the Heart of Britain charity competition in support of Royal Brompton Hospital, the leading edge in heart research and treatment. All royalties from the sale of this book go to fight Britain's biggest killer - heart disease.

AVAILABLE NOW from branches of WH Smith, Menzies, Dillons, Waterstones and other good bookshops across the nation.



Lukashenko: Alliance must not site bombs near Belarus

and Eastern Europe to join the alliance, and hopes to complete the process by 1999. Among those most likely to join is Poland, which shares a border with Belarus.

Although Nato has no plans to deploy nuclear weapons in Poland, the alliance is wary of striking formal deals with Russia or other non-Nato states that could limit its future freedom of action. Nato hopes to ally Russian concerns by forging a close relationship with Moscow that would be defined in a charter to be negotiated as the enlargement process moves forward.

Mr Lukashenko, who is openly in favour of uniting Belarus with Russia, described his country as "the most stable republic in the post-Soviet system



MUMMY, CAN I HAVE A PRETTY FACE LIKE OTHER GIRLS?

The words of an innocent girl. After all, it's not her fault that she contracted leprosy. Yet without help, Mami and thousands like her could be condemned to a lifetime of imprisonment.

But there is a cure. Just £20 will provide the medication to ensure that another youngster like Mami is spared the physical and mental scars of leprosy.

Can you help by sending a donation today? She and thousands like her hope you can.

Thank you



COUNTDOWN

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Postcode

I enclose ☐ £20 ☐ £50 ☐ £100 ☐ Other £

*I enclose my cheque (made payable to The Leprosy Mission)

*I would like to give by Access/Mastercard/Visa - please charge the above amount to my account number

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obituaries / gazette

Professor Peter Fowler

Peter Fowler was one of the outstanding physicists of his generation. His principal research field was that of elementary particles and cosmic rays, but he also made seminal contributions in many other areas, ranging from measurement of jet turbine blade temperatures to cancer therapy with particle beams.

The son of a prominent theoretical physicist, Sir Ralph Fowler, and the grandson of Lord Rutherford, the discoverer of the atomic nucleus, Peter Fowler was a Wykehamist whose first experiments in physics were as a radar officer in the wartime RAF (1942-46). Some time after D-Day, RAF bombers were having problems due to German jamming of their Gee navigation system. Fowler was able to detect the jamming signals and, by a clever analysis which was a real *tour de force*, to pin down the station responsible, which was then destroyed. Goering reportedly demanded a court martial over the breach of security, since he simply could not believe that the British were smart enough to deduce the location of the secret transmitter within a few days of its being switched on.

After taking his degree at Bristol, Fowler joined C.F. Powell's cosmic ray research group. This time in the late Forties was something of a golden era for physics in Britain, with startling new discoveries occurring almost daily.

Fowler was a leading figure in this research; among his notable achievements were the identification of the first example of a new type of "strange" elementary particle called a tau meson (one of his co-workers in this discovery



Fowler: particle physics

was Rosemary Brown, who later became his wife) and the development of novel methods to measure the energies and electrical charges of the high energy primary cosmic ray nuclei, recorded on high-altitude balloon flights. The identification among these of the light elements lithium, beryllium and boron – almost completely absent in the stars – was the first proof that primary cosmic rays had been circling in the galaxy for millions of years, since such light nuclei could only have come from fragmentation of heavier nuclei in rare collisions in the interstellar medium. Fowler was also one of the first people to give the correct explanation of the aurora phenomenon, as due to light from atoms in the stratosphere excited by collisions with particles in the Van Allen radiation belts.

During the late Fifties and early Sixties, a long and systematic study of the characteristics of nuclear interactions at extremely high energies was undertaken using massive detectors carried in balloons and in proving flights of VC10 air-

craft to Australia. This pioneer work of Fowler's laid the basis of later researches using particle accelerators. In 1961 he also wrote an important report for the Air Registration Board demonstrating that, contrary to what some scientists had asserted, the radiation levels due to solar flares in high altitude flights in Concorde across the North Atlantic would be no higher than in subsonic jets.

Peter Fowler's long-term interest in the nature of the cosmic radiation was pursued further using solid state detectors carried in very long balloon flights, and with gas scintillator detectors flown on the *Ariel 6* satellite in the early Eighties. For the first time, significant results were obtained on the fluxes of atoms heavier than bismuth of the actinide series, such as thorium and uranium. The interest in these is that such nuclei can only be built from lighter elements by the rapid neutron capture processes unique to supernova explosions, the death throes of massive stars. The measurement by Peter Fowler of these "super heavy" nuclei is a very important marker for our understanding of the supernova mechanism.

One of the critical factors affecting the efficiency of aircraft jet engines is the temperature of the turbine blades, which is, however, difficult to measure directly when the engine is running. Fowler's ingenuity devised a neat way around this for Rolls Royce by exploiting the resonance capture of low energy neutrons in iron nuclei and the broadening of this resonance with the blade temperature, which could thus be measured

in situ. His most recent research, in which he was active at the time of his death, was a novel application of these ideas to geology, by using neutron resonance thermocouples at thousands of atmospheres pressure, such as obtain deep inside the earth's crust. An accurate temperature calibration is vital to understanding mineral reactions and cannot be obtained in any other way.

Appointed a Reader in Physics at Bristol in 1961, in 1964 Fowler was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and subsequently as a Royal Society Research Professor in Physics. He served as chairman of the Medical Research Council Committee on Radiological Protection (1983-92), as a member of the Meteorological Committee (1983-93) and on the SERC Neutron Facilities Review Panel. He contributed a host of original papers to scientific literature and was joint author of several books, including, with Dr E. Foster, *Forty Years of Particle Physics* (1988).

Outside physics, his diverse interests included gardening (at which he was an expert) and meteorology, which for him was a lifelong hobby.

D. H. Perkins

Peter Howard Fowler, physicist: born 27 February 1923; Assistant Lecturer in Physics, Bristol University 1948-51, Lecturer 1951-61, Reader 1961-64; Royal Society Research Professor in Physics 1964-81 (Emeritus); Visiting Professor, University of Minnesota 1956-57; FRS 1964; married 1949 Rosemary Hempsall (née Brown; three daughters); died Bristol 8 November 1996.

Don Kenyon

Don Kenyon would have been pleased that his last appointment was with the cricket club he had served with devotion since 1946. He died yesterday after being taken ill at a Worcestershire members' meeting at the county ground at New Road.

A right-hand opening batsman and an occasional medium pace bowler, he played eight times for England and was ranked as one of the possible partners for Len Hutton if and when Cyril Washbrook was unavailable. If his recruitment for his country was fleeting, his feats for Worcestershire made him a giant figure in that handsome shire by the Severn.

Staffordshire-born, Kenyon was one of many players hastily recruited into first-class cricket immediately after the Second World War as counties strove to field first-class teams, composed often of ageing pre-war players, amateurs and untried youngsters. Kenyon revealed himself as an opener of promise with a fine array of strokes, application and a cricketing brain.

He was capped the following

year and began a glittering career in the dark green cap, passing 37,000 runs, scoring 74 centuries, reaching 1,000 runs a summer 19 times and seven times scoring more than 2,000. For almost 10 years he and Worcestershire were synonymous. Opposing bowlers reckoned that dismissing Kenyon was the end of half the innings.

He may have been overshadowed by the more charismatic Tom Graveney, who arrived in 1961, yet he was elegant enough in his play to be included by Neville Cardus in a list of batsmen of "style and pleasure" at that time, a list that included Graveney and Jack Robertson of Middlesex.

In 1959 Kenyon became Worcestershire's professional captain and from then onwards took on a stature far above that of star batsman. Gradually an impressive team was put together: Graveney, Jack Flavell, Ron Headley (son of George, father of Dean), Len Coldwell from Devon, Roy Booth from Yorkshire and a future England spinner, Norman Gifford, who



Kenyon: 'the winning habit'

turned up after answering an advertisement in the *Cricketer*.

In 1962 Kenyon led Worcestershire, a club that had never won the Championship, to second place and two years later to their first win. He repeated the feat again in 1965, popular victory at a time when the county had resigned itself to another decade of Yorkshire supremacy. Kenyon had proved himself a fine captain, a good tactician with a sound knowledge of the opposition and an ability to

maintain morale in the dressing room. By 1965 he had also acquired a first-class all-rounder in Basil D'Oliveira. E.W. Swanton described Kenyon's team as "the best balanced of the 17 counties", and while there was criticism of the pitches prepared at New Road, Worcestershire claimed 11 of their 16 victories in 1964 away from home.

Tim Curtis, a later county captain, said of him: "Don gave Worcestershire the winning habit." By the time Kenyon retired from the captaincy in 1967 he had lifted the club to the front rank and his achievements were recognised nationally by an appointment as an England selector from 1965 to 1972, where he helped change the course of history by naming D'Oliveira for a tour of South Africa, the event that focused attention on apartheid – and with his appointment as MBE.

Derek Hodgson

Donald Kenyon, cricketer: born Wordsley, Staffordshire 15 May 1924; married (two daughters); died 13 November 1996.

Alex Atterson

Every movement has its generals and foot-soldiers, and in the ranks of the folk revival Alex Atterson was probably more of an NCO. Though by no means one of his best-known singers, he was a robust performer of the Scottish canon and his settings of the poems of Charles Causley are comparable with – and probably superior to – those of Paul Simon.

Atterson was born in Cam-

bridge Stirling, into an extended family that used to hire the village hall every New Year's Day for an impromptu party in which every member had their party piece, which might be contemporary pop or traditional Scots. He was the only child of a woman who had served as a nanny to the local gentry; his father was a semi-skilled worker with a variety of trades to his name. Alex Atterson trained as an

industrial chemist, coming south to work with the British Sugar Corporation in Peterborough, then moving to the Reckitt and Colman company in Norwich, a city where he stayed until he died. Singing regularly at the local Sunday night folk club, he became a professional performer in the late Sixties – about the same time that he became deeply involved in the Norwich Folk Festival, one

of the most widely respected events in the folk calendar for 13 years until, in 1982, it was barred from the campus of the University of East Anglia because the authorities were afraid that travellers from the then notorious "Convoys" might sneak in and establish a presence there during the event. One of the remarkable features of the festival was that no one was paid. All appeared for

the promise of a share of the takings. Only Atterson could have pulled that off.

He produced two albums of his singing in 1974 and 1977, the second of which took its name, *Pushing the Business On*, from a phrase in the Causley poem, "O Billy, Do You Hear That Bell", which was one of his most accomplished settings.

In 1979, the increased price of petrol and the difficulty of

making a living on the road caused him to abandon his professional status. He trained as a teacher, serving a year at the primary school in Ayle, Norfolk, before transferring to the science department of the high school in the same town, which he came to head by the time of his retirement in July this year.

During his brief professional career, he had established a reputation as a reliable and

warm-hearted performer, whose tastes extended from traditional ballads to jazz rags and foot-stomping, and was particularly highly regarded in Cornwall and in Bedford, to which he returned only last year for the local club's 30th anniversary.

Karl Dallas

Alex Atterson, folk singer: born Stirling 14 April 1931; married (two sons); died 21 September 1996.

Tricia Ingrams

The art of being a good radio and television interviewer is to be a good listener. Interviewees sensed Tricia Ingrams' interest in them and her gentle manner drew revealing insights. She was especially good at interviewing children, young leukaemia sufferers or transplant patients and their families enjoyed her support long after their news had ended.

She was born Patricia Geaney in Edgware, Middlesex, in 1946. Her parents had recently arrived from Ireland, and her father, an electrician, worked hard to establish a hardware shop and accumulated a small property portfolio. There were three more children before, suddenly, Tricia's mother died. Her father never recovered. The family was orphaned when her brothers were aged 15 and 10; her sister just nine. At the age of 18 Tricia demonstrated her formidable strength of character when she fought the battle to keep the family together.

A job with the locally produced magazine of the Spar grocery chain launched her journalistic career. Writing for various IPC magazines followed, but it was as the *Sun's* "Action Girl" in 1970 that she found fame. Her diminutive figure would be pictured at the wheel of a Chieftain tank on Salisbury Plain, skydiving or dressed as a Playboy Club "Bunny".

The unlikely surroundings of the United Biscuits factory in west London saw the launch of her broadcasting career. Like others who went on to become household names in commercial radio she helped provident around-the-clock entertainment for the company's production line workers countrywide.

It was there that she met her husband, Paul Ingrams. When commercial radio started up in London in 1974 she became a newsreader and reporter at Capital Radio, and he went to LBC. She joined him then the following year when Capital closed its in-house news operation, and it was in LBC's urban-station studios off Fleet Street that her career took off.

Tricia Ingrams' warmth and enthusiasm transcended the barrier of microphone and, later, camera. "The Sunday Interview" with leading figures of the day attracted large audiences, as did the phone-ins she helped pioneer.

After helping set up Radio Victoria in Portsmouth in 1976, Tricia and Paul Ingrams returned to London. She moved into television as a reporter/presenter on Thames Television's news programmes. For some years she shared the studio with the former ITN newsreader Andrew GARDNER, tall and powerfully built, she small and slim, immaculately groomed – the perfect foil.

There were personal disappointments and, in 1985, her marriage failed. She left Thames just before the company lost its franchise in 1992, working first at Anglia Television and later at Sky, before returning to radio as a launch presenter with LBC's successor, London News Radio, in 1994.

Tricia Ingrams fought cancer with everything in her armoury. Her determination and sense of the ridiculous never faltered. Three hundred people attended her funeral. At her request, no one wore black.

Barbara Long

Patricia Geaney, broadcaster and journalist: born Edgware 28 March 1946; married 1972 Paul Ingrams (marriage dissolved 1985); died London 26 October 1996.

European working time directive is upheld

LAW REPORT

14 November 1996

United Kingdom v Council of the European Union (Case C-84/94); European Court of Justice; 12 November 1996

A European Court directive, adopted as a measure aimed at contributing to the protection of the "health and safety of workers" under article 118a(2) of the EC Treaty, could validly provide that the average working week be restricted to a maximum of 48 hours.

But a provision for Sundays to be treated as part of the minimum weekly rest period was annulled as lacking a proper legal basis under the Treaty.

The European Court of Justice dismissed, except on one point, the United Kingdom's application for annulment of Council Directive 93/104/EC of 23 November 1993 (OJ 1993 L 307, p 18), the "working time directive".

The directive was adopted on the basis of article 118a of the EC Treaty, under the qualified voting procedure. The UK did not vote. Article 118a (as amended) provided:

1) Member states shall pay particular attention to encouraging improvements, especially in the working environment, as regards the health and safety of workers, and shall set as their objective the harmonisation of conditions in

this area, while maintaining the improvements made.

2) In order to help achieve [this objective] the Council... shall adopt by means of directives, minimum requirements for gradual implementation, having regard to the conditions and technical rules obtaining in each of the member states.

Directive 93/104 required member states to take measures necessary to ensure that every worker was entitled to minimum rest periods, including an uninterrupted rest period of 24 hours per each seven-day period, plus 11 hours' daily rest (article 5, first sentence) which in principle included Sunday (article 5, second sentence).

Furthermore, the weekly working time was to be fixed "in keeping with the need to protect the safety and health of workers" at national level (article 6(1)) and the average working time for each seven-day period, including overtime, was not to exceed 48 hours (article 6(2)).

The UK asked the court to annul the directive on the grounds, *inter alia*, that there was an error as to the choice of legal basis and that the princi-

ple of proportionality had been infringed.

The European Court of Justice emphasised that it was not its function to review the expediency of measures adopted by the legislature. Judicial review in annulment proceedings must be limited to the legality of the disputed measure.

After examining the scope of article 118a, the court held that where the principal aim of a measure was the protection of the health and safety of workers, that article must be the legal basis, albeit such a measure might have ancillary effects on the establishment and functioning of the internal market. Contrary to the UK's contention, this could not be given a restrictive interpretation.

In regard to the second sentence of article 5 of the directive, which provided that the minimum weekly rest period must in principle include Sunday, the Council had failed to explain why Sunday, as a week-day rest day, was more closely connected with the health and safety of workers than any other day of the week. The second

sentence of article 5 must therefore be annulled.

Subject to that finding, the court considered that the directive's principal objective was the protection of the health and safety of workers by the imposition of minimum requirements for gradual implementation. It therefore held that the directive, apart from the second sentence of article 5, was properly adopted on the basis of article 118a.

As to the argument that the principle of proportionality was infringed, the court found that in the sphere of the protection of the health and safety of workers, the minimum requirements laid down by the Council might go beyond the lowest level of protection established by the various member states. Moreover, the Council had a wide discretion in an area which, as here, involved social policy choices and required it to conduct complex assessments.

Within the confines of its limited power of judicial review, the court held that the Council did not commit any manifest error, was not guilty of a misuse of powers and did not manifestly exceed the bounds of its discretion.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

HARMER: On 31 October, to Clara (née Blake-James) and Andrew, a daughter, Felicity Elizabeth; a sister, for Clara, Edmund; and a brother, for Andrew, Edmund.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 3011.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince and Princess of Wales, will attend the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 14 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 15 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 16 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 17 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 18 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 19 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 20 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 21 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 22 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 23 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 24 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 25 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 26 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 27 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 28 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 29 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 30 November. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 1 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 2 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 3 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 4 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 5 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 6 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 7 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 8 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 9 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 10 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 11 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 12 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 13 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 14 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 15 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 16 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 17 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 18 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 19 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 20 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 21 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 22 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 23 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 24 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 25 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 26 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 27 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 28 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 29 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 30 December. The Duke and Duchess will also attend a dinner at the Imperial War Museum, London, on 31 December.

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment will march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 14 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 15 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 16 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 17 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 18 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 19 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 20 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 21 November. The Queen's Life Guard will also march in the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London, on 22 November. 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Birthdays

The Prince of Wales, 48; King Hussein of Jordan, 61; Sir Lawrence Burrell, chairman, Barrat Development plc, 69; Dr Douglas Boustead, Secretary-General, United Nations, 74; Mr Quentin Crewe, writer and restaurateur, 70; Mr James Crowden, Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, 69; Mr Paul Dacre, Editor, *Daily Mail*, 48; Mr Thomas Dawson QC, former Solicitor General for Scotland, 48; Mr Freddie Garrity, rock singer, 56; The Right Rev. Mr George Hay, parish priest, 66; M Bernard Hinnell, cyclist, 42; Mr Peter Katin, concert pianist, 66; Mr Mark Le Fanu, General Secretary, the Society of Authors, 50; Mr Marshall Sir Richard Nelson, 89; Mr Patrick Nichols MP, 48; Mr Gunther Sachs, former German bobsleigh champion, 64; Mr David Shaw MP, 46; Miss Diana Skilbeck, Headmistress, the Queen's School, Chester, 54; Sir Dudley Smith MP, 70; Sir Joseph Smith, former director, Public Health Laboratory Service, 66; Sir Arthur Watts, former legal adviser, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 65.

Anniversaries

Births: Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt, architect, 1668; Sir Charles Lanyon, geologist, 1797; Claude-Oscar Monet, painter, 1840; Leo Hendrik Baekeland, inventor of Bakelite, 1863; Steele Rudd (Arthur Hoey Davis), novelist, 1868; Pandit Jawahar Nehru, statesman, 1889; Sir Frederick Grant Banting, physician, 1891; Harold Larwood, cricketer, 1904; Dick Powell (Richard Ewing Powell), actor and singer, 1904; Joseph Raymond McCarthy, senator, 1908; Dame Elisabeth Frink, sculptor, 1930. Deaths: Justinian I, Roman emperor, 565; Thomas Parr, known as "Old Parr", reputedly aged 151, 1635; Nell (Eleanor) Gwynn, actress and mistress of Charles II, 1687; Louise de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth, mistress of Charles II, 1734; Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, philosopher, 1831; Dr John Abercrombie, physician, 1844; Robert Whitehead, inventor of the torpedo, 1905; Hector Hugh Munro ("Saki"), writer, killed in action 1916; Robert Emmet Sherwood, playwright, 1955; Tony Richardson, film and theatre director, 1991. On this day: one of the greatest known earthquakes in England occurred, 1318; Lieutenant Eugene Ely, US Navy, was the first man to take off in an aircraft from the deck of a ship, 1910; book tokens first went on sale, 1932; Coventry Cathedral was destroyed by enemy bombing, 1940; the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal* was sunk, 1941; the *New Musical Express* published Britain's first pop music chart, 1952; after a subterranean volcano erupted, a new island, named Surtsey, appeared off Iceland, 1963; colour television transmission was begun in Britain, 1969; Princess Anne married Captain Mark Phillips, 1973. Today is the Feast Day of St Ado-nis Ahiert, St Dubricius or Dyfrig, St Laurence O'Toole, St Nicholas Breille, St Peter of Narbonne and St Stephen of Cuneo.

Lectures

National Gallery: Alexander Sargent, "Peepers (I)"; Samuel van Hoogstraaten, *A Peepshow with Views of the Interior of a Dutch House*, 1700. National Portrait Gallery: Jacob Simon, "The Art of the Picture Frame", 1,10pm.

Victoria and Albert Museum: Susan North, "The Art of Savile Row Tailoring: the firm of Henry Poole 1806-1996", 2.30pm.

British Museum: Constantine Politis, "Archaeology in Jordan (I): two cemeteries on the Dead Sea", 1.15pm.

London School of Economics, London WC2 (1949 Seminar Memorial Lecture): John Tusa, "Can the Good Society be a Cheap Society?", 5.30pm.

Conrad Institute of Art, London WC2: Jane Robert, "Sir William Chambers and George III", 6.30pm. Leicester University: Professor Zdzislaw Dazynkiewicz, "Apoptosis, Cyclins and Cell Cycle Control", 5.30pm.

Dinners

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Sir Nicholas Bonsor MP, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, hosted a dinner yesterday at Lancaster House, London SW1, on the occasion of the Seminar on Reconciliation and Reconstruction in Bosnia and Herzegovina organised by the British Association for Central and Eastern Europe.

Institute of Materials

The Duke of Edinburgh presented the Institute of Materials' Prince Philip Award for Polymers in the Service of Mankind to Maunsell Structural Plastics Ltd at a ceremony held yesterday at Buckingham Palace, London SW1. Sir Geoffrey Allen, Past President of the Institute, was the host at a luncheon held afterwards at the Institute's headquarters, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1.

ilots

When the civil service must say 'No, minister'

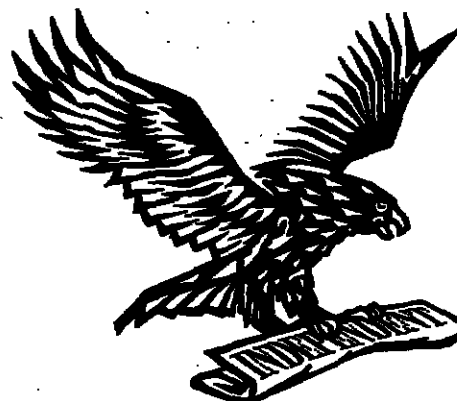
If Conservative ministers and party whips behave as if they own the apparatus of the state, to be revved up at their private convenience, then they have only themselves to blame when they are accordingly embarrassed by the disclosure of their actions. We report today on the House of Commons select committee examining legislation to enable the Channel Tunnel rail link to go ahead – ostensibly a prejudice-free zone, since it has to settle delicate questions of compensation for Kentish people whose houses are in the way. But now it appears as if ministers have been seeking to manipulate it. These are the colleagues of ministers who yesterday used the Department of Health to produce a "white paper" which is nothing other than a party manifesto. It contains no new policy and amounts to little more than a pre-election statement aimed at protecting the Tories' exposed flank. And that follows closely on the disclosure last weekend that Michael Heseltine wanted to use civil servants to drum up claque to shout their support of government policies.

All this comes from ministers who were once chastened enough to bring Lord Nolan in to affirm standards of conduct in public life, who once, on pain of their political lives, had to read Sir Richard Scott's painstaking dissection of the way in which they and their officials had sailed dangerously

close to deliberate deception of the House of Commons. All this, moreover, from ministers who make such a song and dance about the loss of sovereign parliamentary powers to unaccountable Brussels bureaucrats, and who are wont to lecture the Scots and the Welsh on the ideal of parliamentary government which they all stand to lose if they persist in demanding alternative institutions.

It is not enough to say, with world-weary disdain, that such power plays are a natural and inevitable feature of government. In reality, as Nolan and others have recognised, our parliamentary system works best if there are periodic changes of government, and many of these shades of abuse arise from the Conservative Party's complacency in power. A sense that the health of the system depends on alternation in power is broadly diffused among the British public. Seventeen years in power is dangerous. Even ministers, when their better selves prevail, recognise this. Why else did the Government promise last week to table a House of Commons resolution setting out, for the first time in this public fashion, a clear statement of ministers' duties, notably in treating the House of Commons with the respect of the truth?

If a non-Conservative government is elected (and it remains an "if"), it will not of itself expunge all traces of



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the notion that might be right. Labour or Liberal Democrat ministers would also be very tempted to grab the wheels and levers of the Whitehall and parliamentary machine, and manipulate it to their ends. All the more reason to be vigilant. Peter Hennessy's adage that proper procedure is all the constitution we have is essentially correct: our system of government is a covenant based on implicit rules. Among them is the distinction between work that public officials do on behalf of a duly constituted government, and work that serves the ends of party. The very authority of

this, or any alternative government, depends on ordinary people believing that government works in the general interest. That sentiment depends in turn on the belief that the government's staff (those for whom public service is a career) are disinterested. We may still laugh at that terribly anachronistic picture of Sir Humphrey, but we are glad in the knowledge that he cannot be bought or twisted.

That is the reason why the system will always need figures as bold as Sir David Ramsbotham, the chief inspector of prisons. Sir David is not

a civil servant, but the pleasure we register at his independence of mind is all the greater given his previous career as a dutiful soldier. If the Home Secretary appointed him thinking him a cat's-paw, all the more credit to him for getting his claws out. Chris Woodhouse of the Office for Standards in Education should note: the effectiveness of inspection correlates inversely with the deference of inspectors to the whims and wishes of ministers. Such independence is a precious quality: too much and it tips over into unaccountability; too little and it becomes an empty label for lackeys.

Civil servants are not independent in the way that inspectors are. Rather, their job is to carry out the instructions of those who attain ministerial office and do so with diligence and enthusiasm. If Labour comes to power, it too will want this job definition fulfilled. But civil servants are bound to uphold the law. We rely on them to follow those unseen but vital conventions that, for example, censure any attempt to deceive Parliament. Sir Robin Butler's rejection of Michael Heseltine's bid to use civil servants as cheerleaders shows the neutrality convention is still in force. It, and Sir Robin, are likely to be tested further in the weeks before the election, for example over partisan use of the Government Information Service. Just as Parliament must be wary of allowing party

loyalty to override the protection of MPs' independence of mind, so Sir Robin must be careful to ensure that his civil servants' professional commitment does not veer towards another kind of commitment altogether.

Deep thought, but very little nous

One Spade, Two Diamonds, Three Gigabytes. Last year, a computer beat Garry Kasparov at chess; now at Edinburgh University the machines are taking up bridge. But it may take 30 years before machines become a threat to the best human players. Some say computers make bad bridge partners because they cannot cope with the guesswork involved. But human bridge-players also have to guess. The real human advantage lies in our talent for mendacity. Computer bridge players assume their human opponents act rationally. One small bluff, a "false card" or a "psychic" bid, may throw them completely off course. The word "trickery" itself comes from the card table, and trickery exposes the naivety of artificial intelligence. That is why computers are unlucky at cards: no Hearts.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tax on free parking will end gridlock

Sir: John Redwood ("How I would free drivers from gridlock", 12 November) rightly highlights the fact that Berkshire County Council "provides free parking places to its employees, 91 per cent of whom drive to work". But why leave it there, with its subtle implication that this is a failing of those local authorities that it is such fun to bash? Why not develop the same theme to include all urban-based employers?

I was appointed as a member of the first Acbe (Advisory Committee for Business and the Environment) by two of Mr Redwood's colleagues, Michael Heseltine and Peter Lilley, and constantly urged its Global Warming Working Group to consider recommending that employees' free parking places should be considered as taxable benefits: say, at £20 a day in central London.

I found that the majority of such free spaces provided by my then-employer were used by those who merely used their cars to commute or, worse still, to move a few miles around London on journeys that could be done in less time by tube/bus/walking. My suggestion did not make it into Acbe reports, but I am sure that to treat free parking provision as a taxable benefit would make a lot of beneficiaries reconsider their commuting arrangements.

Considering that free home-to-office mileage is often included, perhaps really committed employers – certainly all of those signed up to the Government's *Making a Corporate Commitment* – should alter their free parking perk to paying for free parking at home railway stations. One benefit would be that those rushing to the 9am meeting would at least have read the meeting documents beforehand. ROBERT J JONES
Energy Policy Studies
Chelmsford, Essex

Sir: Just when I thought a Tory MP could say nothing to surprise me, John Redwood offered his "solution" to overcrowded roads. While I support his propositions to get more people on their feet or on public transport, I was incensed by his attack on traffic-calming measures such as bollards, chicanes and speed cameras. Why on earth does Mr Redwood think that so many counties and boroughs have "gone mad, spending a fortune" on these things?

Traffic-calming is now widespread because so many motorists deliberately flout speed restrictions, thereby endangering the lives of pedestrians and other motorists. Yes, it slows drivers down, because that is exactly what it is meant to do. If the likes of Mr Redwood are irritated by such "clutter", bad luck.

As a mother of three I am heartily sick of people speeding through our village without a moment's thought for who might lie in their path, and wholeheartedly support any measures which force them to slow down. If you don't like it, Mr Redwood, get on your bike. EMMA FAUGHTON
Uplme Traffic Action Group
Uplme, Devon

Sir: I was interested to read John Redwood's comments on the ever-increasing problem of traffic congestion. It is a shame that Mr Redwood should criticise councils



that are trying to find solutions, especially when they come to the same conclusion – shift people from car to bus and train – that the ex-minister himself does.

Bollards, chicanes, red road surfaces, traffic lights and speed cameras may not be the only instruments for traffic calming, but they are certainly measures that reduce the speed of cars. One man's traffic-calming may well be another man's road rage, but without such traffic-calming measures, it could be another child's road accident.

One idea that Mr Redwood did not explore was legislation to reduce the amount of traffic. This week the Road Traffic Reduction Bill has been chosen as a Private Members Bill by the Liberal Democrat MP Don Foster. It will be interesting to see how Mr Redwood reacts.

We all know there is a problem of road traffic congestion. With the Road Traffic Reduction Bill, MPs now have the opportunity to do something constructive about it. I encourage readers to lobby their MPs to support this Bill – especially if that MP is John Redwood. MATTHEW TAYLOR MP
Liberal Democrat Environment Spokesman
House of Commons
London SW1

Sir: John Redwood recognises that the traffic problem is catastrophic, but thinks the central solution is the removal of a few bollards. London's transport can run much more efficiently – through road pricing. But that is something this government is simply not prepared to face up to. EMILY BULMAN
Leeds

Saro-Wiwa had wealth already

Sir: Ken Saro-Wiwa was executed for campaigning against one of the world's largest corporations, and one of the world's most corrupt and oppressive regimes.

Ken was indeed no saint – who is? To suggest that he made his fortune from corruption is scurrilous. Saro-Wiwa was one of Africa's most highly regarded authors, who created and wrote amongst many things the soap opera *Baru & Co.* This long-running series is still one of the most watched programmes in the world. To claim that Saro-Wiwa started his campaign as a "useful route to fame and wealth" when he was already both famous and wealthy is absurd.

Richard North ("Can you be sure of Ken Saro-Wiwa?", 8 November) describes Ogoniland as just a "patch of the swampy Niger delta". He would think that wouldn't be, flying over the area in a Shell helicopter? The delta used to be known as the breadbasket of Nigeria, such was the fertility of the land and the abundance of fish in the water. Now large parts of the land are so polluted that it will not support crops for years to come, and the fish stocks have collapsed.

It is too late for Ken Saro-Wiwa and the other eight Ogoni men executed one year ago. It is not too late for Shell to exercise its influence responsibly over the Nigerian government to ensure that more proceeds from the

extraction of Ogoni oil go to the Ogoni, and to bring about a fair trial for the Ogoni 19 who are currently in jail on trumped-up charges.

RICHARD BAGNALL
Chairman
London Ogoni Group Support
London SW18

National funding benefits pupils

Sir: Your front-page story and leading article on 12 November tackled the politics of educational funding.

Currently, the education of all the nation's children is prescribed by a National Curriculum with a National Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. Performance is monitored by national league tables and by the national Ofsted framework, while the single biggest budgetary commitment (75 per cent-plus) is teachers' salaries, again paid by national pay scales.

It really is time that the funding of pupils in schools was related to some national entitlement within the context of a national funding formula.

It has only been since the creation of the grant-maintained sector that schools in different LEA areas have been in a position to compare budgets, most notably via the Common Funding Formula. This has shown that children in very comparable schools in very comparable LEA areas can have

huge disparity of funding – differences of 20 per cent and more are commonplace.

G. HENSON
Chairman, Association of Heads of Grant-Maintained Schools
Chigwell, Essex

Phone museum? Back to Bell

Sir: Further to your article (5 November) about the uncertain future of the unprofitable but remarkable telephone museum that forms part of British Telecom's public sector legacy, you write that a major problem for the museum will be its future lack of a home, and that its current location, in the heart of London, is little known and less visited.

Our flat here on in the centre of Edinburgh shares South Charlotte Street with, at one end, a British Telecom showroom (facing the castle), and at the other end (Charlotte Square), the house where Alexander Graham Bell was born. The only commemoration of this remarkable man in Edinburgh that I know of is the plaque on this house.

Apart from the Georgian House museum and the headquarters of the Scottish National Trust, Charlotte Square is largely vacated, and tenants are sought. Are there not numerous arguments for relocating the telephone museum to this place of its origin? PAUL SANKEY
Edinburgh

A walk in the German woods

Sir: I Gregory (letter, 9 November) argues that the "right to roam" is promoted by those who refuse to recognise "that land is not primarily for the occasional recreation of casual users".

I know of no one who would argue that casual recreation is what land is primarily for. The Ramblers' Association certainly does not put forward such an argument.

What we do say is that members of the public should be able to wander freely through woodland and over unsuited countryside, as long as they treat the land with due care and respect.

This principle has already been enacted in a number of other European countries. The House of Commons Environment Committee, for example, found that in Germany not only does the law allowing public access to all woodlands work perfectly well, but representatives of private owners of woodland have no objection to it.

ALAN MATTINGLY
Director
The Ramblers' Association
London SW8

Sir: I read in *Le Monde* recently that the mayor of Larran, a small town in the French Pyrenees, has banned walkers, on the grounds that "they disrupt the right to hunt" and that this is likely to lead to a breach of public order. This ban lasts until 15 November, the end of the season for shooting *palombe*, more widely known as the bird of peace. DAVID SHAMASH
Wantage, Oxfordshire

An 'agony uncle' before Defoe

Sir: Jack O'Sullivan's article on the lack of "agony uncles" in modern publishing (12 November) highlights an interesting aspect of late 20th-century masculinity in that men are still expected to cope with emotions rather than express them or admit they need help. It was not always thus, as Mr O'Sullivan suggests, but he is incorrect when he states that Daniel Defoe was the first agony columnist.

The problem page was in fact invented by the philanthropic London bookseller and publisher John Dunton, who in 1691 published the *Athenian Mercury*, a periodical devoted entirely to the "Nice and Curious Questions" sent in by its readers.

Dunton was helped in his project by the all-male "Athenian Society" who got together once a week in a coffee house to devise answers (not always sympathetic) to the "ingenious" questions on courtship, love, sex and marriage posed by its male and female readers. This reinforces Mr O'Sullivan's argument that men rather than women were the first to deal with personal problems in print, but it seems a pity to give Defoe the credit for ripping off Dunton's idea in the *British Apollo* some years later.

The contents of the questions in the *Athenian Mercury* suggest that, indeed, there is nothing new under the sun when it comes to personal angst, but it is interesting to consider the reasons why in the 1690s, in contrast to the 1990s, men were able to discuss personal matters freely (albeit anonymously) and solicit advice from other men. What went wrong in the interim? HELEN BERRY
Jesus College
Cambridge

The secret of number 42

Sir: The number 42, established by Cambridge astronomers as the value of the "Hubble Constant" ("Yes, the answer to the universe really is 42", 8 November) is no ordinary number. It is the product of 6 and 7; 6 is one of the very few "perfect numbers", ie those that are the sum of their factors, while 7 is the number of the days of creation. DR C D WILSON
West Kirby, Merseyside

Sir: The Norwegian Computing Centre also came up with the answer 42 for a very small part of the universe, namely the North Sea. The figure 42 turned out to be the whales' self-allocated 1996 quota, though as this number of whales could not be found, perhaps the Deep Thought computer should spend the next seven and a half million years checking the result. VASSILI PAPAISTRAROU
Bristol

Sir: On reading your report I went to consult Asimov's *New Guide to Science*. I found that in the index there was just one reference to Hubble – on page 42. J S ARTHUR
Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire

Sir: If the answer to everything really is 42, as scientists – along with Zaphod Beeblebrox – are now claiming, this accounts for Tony Blair's hair crisis. Mr Blair was 43 on 6 May. ED HOOSON
London N4

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.
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E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

analysis

Back to school for mum and dad

Labour's Jack Straw wants politicians involved in parenting. But, Jack O'Sullivan asks, does the nanny state really know what's best?

Jack Straw's idea that the state should be telling parents how to look after their children will raise a few eyebrows. Who said the "nanny state" was dead? The Shadow Home Secretary would like the courts to be able to order the parents of delinquents to be properly trained in their caring craft. He also called for a voluntary network of parent advice groups to be established for the rest of us.

Yet the state is in no position to point the finger at poor parents. It is, after all, the worst parent of all – talk to a few children who have been in council care and you will often get a tale of misery that can compete with life under the most Dickensian parents. And who trusts guidance from politicians, a group whose failure to regulate their own hours in the House of Commons mark them out as some of the worst offenders in absentee parenting?

Indeed, when politicians start talking about improving families, you wonder are they really just privatising their own responsibilities. You also wonder are they really committed to providing the cash resources for childcare and shorter working hours which would really improve the lot of children. This is, after all, the week in which the Government registered its implacable opposition to a 48-hour working week, a limit which would have direct bearing on how much time fathers, in particular, can expect to spend with the children.

Labour is more pro-family

than the Government, supporting paternity leave and the 48 hour limit. But would Mr Straw back the radical measures adopted in Scandinavia, which give men and women lengthy parental leave during the first years of a child's life?

There is also the question of which model of parenting ought to be adopted. Should we, for example, rely on the authoritarian views of Aristophanes? In the 5th century BC, the Greek philosopher declared: "Come listen now to the good old days, when children, strong to tell, were seen not heard, led a simple life, in short, were well brought up."

Perhaps John Wesley divined the secret. "In order to form the minds of children," he said, "the first thing to be done is to conquer their will ... The parent who indulges it does the devil's work ... Break his will now, and his soul will live, and he will probably bless you to all eternity."

Or was the advice in *The Lady* a century ago closer to the mark? "One of the most important and beneficial habits that can be taught a child in early life is to keep its mouth shut when sleeping, and indeed at all times, when eating or speaking."

The trouble is that fashions in child-rearing change at an extraordinary rate. In this century, Jean Piaget's identification of the stages of childhood development, combined with Freud's view that childhood experience profoundly shapes the adult, have made child-rearing a delicate and complex task. But opinions about how to go about that

task have varied wildly even in the past few decades, from Thelma King in the Forties and Fifties, who counselled against spoiling a child ("The boy who is picked up and fed whenever he cries soon becomes a veritable tyrant") to Benjamin Spock, who cautioned against the damage that children suffered if they were not cared for at all times (he is still being psychoanalysed in New York at the age of 93).

Where, for example, should parenting instructors stand on the question of disciplining children? There has been a fashion since the Second World War of relaxing the rules that children had been required to obey. But there is now a backlash led by writers such as the Australian expert, Christopher Green, author of *Toddler Taming*, calling for tougher controls. Christina Hardyment, the controversial British author of *Perfect Parents*, is part of a new wave of thinking which challenges recent theories in favour of more traditional, less indulgent parenting.

Yet, despite all the disagreement about the best forms of parenting, there is little dissent about either its importance or difficulties that many families face in raising their children. To this extent, Jack Straw has caught the mood of the times. Parents want more knowledge.

It is, however, quite hard to find anyone to talk to. Antenatal care in this country is good. GP clinics and the National Childbirth Trust offer good courses in preparing for birth. But it is very difficult to

find a parenting course. Between the ages of one and five, when children start school, most parents are virtually abandoned by support services.

"Once you have your baby, you find yourself saying: 'Oh God, what do I do now?'" says Hetty Einzig, Development Officer of the Parenting Education and Support Forum.

But parenting courses are beginning to be established around the country. In prisons, for example, they are the most popular courses among young men. Schools are experimenting with training teenagers to care for children. "Little Moss Lads Learn To Be Dads," was how one local newspaper reported a pilot scheme in Greater Manchester schools, run by The Children's Society. In five schools, 14-18-year-olds have been debating issues such as different forms of corporal punishment, the problems for chil-

dren of separation and how they feel about how their parents deal with them.

Annette Mountford, executive co-ordinator of the Oxford-based Family Nurturing Network, runs a 15-week programme for families referred by teachers or social workers. It specialises in "positive parenting", offering alternative forms of control to corporal punishment and shouting. "Typically, the parents are desperate. They don't know what to do because the kids are running rings around them," she says.

Parents learn how to present a child with a choice. "Say a child is fighting. You present him with a choice. He can play or he can carry on fighting. If he carries on fighting then he has to take two minutes' time out. It might take an hour to get him through the time out, because it only starts when he is quiet. But

in the end, it's effective. It distances the parent and the child in the heat of the moment. The parent can deal with the child with dignity rather than hitting him or going out of control."

Mrs Mountford argues that "it would be better if we could get to families earlier and prevent them getting into this downward spiral. If we can deal with children when they are four, we can turn them around quickly. By eight or nine they are very distressed."

Pippin, a charity which for the past two years has provided free advice classes for new parents, is beginning to fill this gap. "All the research shows that parents are facing a great deal of stress," says Penny Henderson, a group facilitator for Pippin, which wants the NHS and councils to fund its services.

"Geographical mobility means that few parents have extended families close by or the

experience of being around children as they were growing up. If you have been a computer operator for 10 years or a prison officer or a seaman, you might not have spent a lot of time with children. You may have forgotten the drudgery of caring for them 24 hours a day or never even known it."

The changing fashions in child-rearing can also cause difficulties, she says. "Two parents may find that they have been brought up with very different techniques of child-rearing. So they need to sort out what to do. If they themselves had a difficult time in childhood, if they did not have their needs met, then they may need help. When the baby cries, for example, you may be tempted to shove the bottle in its mouth because you may not be able to bear the unrequited half-memory of your own neglect."

Pippin's philosophy is based

on the ideas of Daniel Stern, who last year published *The Motherhood Constellation*. It argues that pregnancy and the period immediately after birth offers a unique opportunity for a mother to deal with problems arising out of her own upbringing which can get in the way of providing good care for her child. The same may well be true for fathers.

What distinguishes all these courses is that they are non-didactic, a point Mr Straw should take on board. They tend to be more concerned about giving parents new ways of thinking about their craft, rather than laying down a fixed path. The childcare specialist, Penelope Leach, demonstrated the dangers of rigid systems when she wrote: "Rearing a child by the book – by any set of rules or pre-determined ideas – can work well if the rules you choose to follow fit the baby you happen to have. But even a minor misfit between the two can be a misery."

The other characteristic is that these courses do not stigmatise parenthood as some sort of pathological condition responsible for all the country's woes. One fear is that Jack Straw, in his zeal to be seen tackling crime, will lump the blame on parents.

He is right to see a connection between crime and parenting. A forthcoming paper by David Utting of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation identifies the following family factors as producing a greater risk of delinquency: poor supervision, harsh or erratic discipline, absence of a biological parent, siblings or parents in trouble with the law, and low family income.

A support programme for low-income mothers in New York involving home visits by professionals giving advice on health, nutrition, child development and parenting, reduced delinquency among the children considerably when compared with the matched control group.

But if Mr Straw allows parental instruction to be meted out as a punishment to the parents of delinquents his action could have disastrous results. Parental advisors could be stigmatised, just as social workers have become stereotyped as the last group of professionals that parents in difficulty would consult.

Mr Straw's interest in parents is welcome – they need it. But blaming them for all ills is a dated and unhelpful strategy. As David Herbert points out in *Sending Lemons. Promoting Positive Parenting*, it was an ancient Egyptian inscription, 6,000 years ago, which first bemoaned: "Our earth is degenerate. Children no longer obey their parents." Hopefully, Mr Straw will have a more progressive attitude.

Parenting Education and Support Forum: 8 Wakeley St, London EC1V 7QE.

Pippin: "Derwood", Todd Green, Stevenage, Herts, SG12JE.

Family Nurturing Network: Unit 12F, Minus Estate, 7 West Way, Boleby, Oxford OX2 0JP.

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Revealed: the secret life of a camera crew



Miles Kingston

A TV film crew went round the Royal Opera House for a year, filming everything. A TV film crew went round the Victoria and Albert Museum for ages filming everything. TV film crews have been going round royal palaces filming everything for as long as we can remember. Is there nothing left for film crews to follow round?

Yes, there is, as a matter of fact. The one thing that a film crew has never followed round is another film crew, and for the past 12 months I have been working with a

crew that has done precisely that. The result, a 12-part series called *In Camera*, unerringly captures the feeling of what it's like working with a top quality film crew.

Don't believe me? Here's a typical extract from this epic undertaking:

MORNING, GREY DAWN, A BATTERED VOLVO ARRIVES AT THE EDGE OF A LARGE FIELD, TWO MEN GET OUT AND START SHIVERING. THEY ARE JOHN THE CAMERAMAN AND RON THE SOUND MAN. John: Get the stuff out the back, would you, Ron? Ron: Get your own blooming stuff out. John: OK, just joking. Keep your hair on ... Where's the van? John: Refreshment van. I couldn't half murder a cup of tea. Ron: There's no refreshment van. This isn't bleeding *Pride and Prejudice*. We're not on big-time location. John: What are we doing, then?

Ron: We're doing a short piece to camera for *Rural Rides Revised*.

John: Is that the one where Clive James goes round England on a horse?

Ron: I don't think so. It's the one where the presenter comes to see how much the English countryside has changed in 200 years.

John: Oh, right. And he faces the camera and says ... Ron: This countryside has really changed a lot in 200 years ...

John: ... and we have to find the bloody pictures to lift his script out of the litter bin ... Who is the presenter, incidentally?

Ron: Don.

John: The one that keeps scratching his mike? Ron: I'll crown him if he starts scratching his mike again today. He must sodding know his blooming mike is stuck in his jersey, so why does he scratch his chest?

John: Why not put the mike somewhere else? Ron: I know where I'd like to put it.

John: I hope they turn up before the light gets any worse. See that programme on telly last night?

Ron: No.

John: Nor did I.

A LONG PAUSE. JOHN SETS UP A TRIPOD. HE TAKES IT DOWN AGAIN. RON PUTS ON A PAIR OF HEADPHONES.

John: What are you recording? THERE IS NO ANSWER.

John: (shouting) What Are You Recording?

RON SEES HIS LIPS MOVING AND TAKES HIS HEADPHONES OFF.

Ron: Sorry. Didn't hear you. Had these headphones on.

John: What are you recording?

Ron: Nothing.

John: Why the headphones?

Ron: Ears cold.

John: Fair enough.

Ron: Where the hell are they?

John: Who?

Ron: Don and the others.

John: Who cares. They'll turn up.

AN HOUR PASSES. JOHN AND RON ARE STILL THERE. NOBODY ELSE HAS TURNED UP.

John: ... Anyway, there were nine of us altogether in the café, and we all had a cup of tea each, and when the waitress came, we said,

"Could we have nine separate bills, please, so we can claim separate expenses?" and you should have seen her face!

Ron: Did I ever tell you about the time this Thai restaurant gave us a receipt for \$3,500 by mistake?

John: Yes.

Ron: Do you want to hear it again?

John: No.

Ron: Where are they, for crying out loud?

A MOBILE PHONE STARTS RINGING.

Ron: Phone. Not mine. Must be yours.

John: (unswerving phone) Hello ... Yes ... No, we've been here for hours. Where are you? What field? Hold on ... (to Ron) Get the map, would you?

RON GETS THE MAP PROTESTINGLY. JOHN SPREADS IT OUT.

John: Yeah ... yeah ... Oh, that field. Right, see you.

Ron: What's the story?

John: Wrong place. Jump in the car. I'll tell you. (He turns to camera.) You coming?

Not stuff, eh? And there's another 12 hours where that came from!

صلى الله عليه وسلم

the commentators

Labour can gain from the 48-hour watershed

The most telling moment in the aftermath of this week's European Court judgment upholding the 48-hour week was the Commons intervention of the criminal barrister Sir Ivan Lawrence. Lawrence is a rock-solid and belligerent MP of the old Tory right. He's a populist, all right, but he isn't on the extreme edge of Europhobia by Tory standards. He wasn't, for example, a whipless rebel. Yet he suggested that Europe should be told that "if we are not to get fair play... we are prepared to leave the European Union". If he had said that five years ago, it would have caused a sensation. On this occasion there wasn't even a murmur of protest.

If nothing else, Lawrence's excitable response is a reminder of just how euphoric his backbenchers – and his super-fickle supporters among Tory editors and proprietors – are now that John Major has a tailor-made European issue to be tough about. It unites the Tory party because it strikes at its ideologically non-interventionist heart.

The Prime Minister has a real case, which is that the 48-hour directive was forced through as a Health and Safety measure simply in order to avoid the British veto. It is far from mere fantasy to suppose that he can secure, as part of the inter-governmental negotiations on the EU's future, a political decision that will in effect reverse the court judgment. In short, and in contrast to the miserable episode of BSE for which Douglas Hogg bore the parliamentary brunt in an Opposition debate in the Commons yesterday, he could actually win.

What's more the 48-hour week has provided a *casus belli*, when the IGC threatened to be rather free of others in the run-up to the election. The Foreign Office view, for some time, has been that Britain's EU partners would try to avoid showdowns with Major in the run-up to the election, precisely because they feared that Labour would simply follow them into whatever Euro-sceptic trench the Prime Minister chose to inhabit. And that if they did, it would be all the more difficult for Tony Blair to do deals if and when he won the election. Here, by contrast, was an issue on which Tony Blair could not fail, because of Labour's natural constituency, to play the pro-European card and so open up clear water between himself and the Tories. And in the process break his own campaign rules by alienating newspapers like the *Sun* and the *Daily Mail* which so fulsomely praised Major yesterday.

But is this a threat or an opportunity for Labour? Blair can defend the 48-hour measure on its own merits without buying into the whole employee protection agenda now threatened by the EU social affairs commissioner Padraig



Donald MacIntyre

Now that the Tories may have finally found their clear blue water, Tony Blair is free to swim to Europe

scepticism – as perhaps it can on law and order – even if it wanted to. Public opinion doesn't exist in a vacuum; it responds to political leadership. And circumstances, as well as conviction, continue to dictate that Labour has to fight the election as the party of Europe.

Labour can legitimately point out that the drain of British influence in Europe has reduced its capacity to secure objectives the Government shares with the other Westminster parties. For example, there is the prosaic but hugely important issue of reforming the Common Agricultural Policy. The presence of the Ivan Lawrences – not to mention the Norman Lamonts or the dozens of MPs who will defy Government policy by ruling out the single currency in their election addresses – actually makes it easier for Labour to argue that Britain has to decide whether it wants to be in or out, and if the answer is in, that Labour is the party to restore Britain's political capital in Europe.

The Europe envisaged by Tony Blair is not so different, perhaps, from the one that John Major and Kenneth Clarke, left entirely to themselves, would choose. But there is nothing shameful about offering a new start in trying to achieve it. This week, in preparation for his trip to see President Chirac, Blair gave one or two interviews to the Paris press in French. It is a tiny, but rather refreshing, start.

Flynn. But the 48-hour issue may also prove a watershed.

Those close to Tony Blair strongly deny it, but there have been distinct signs of a turning of Labour's pro-European rhetoric over the past few months. Take EMU, for example. Robin Cook, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, surfaces from time to time and gives strong and tightly coded indications that he is against going into the single currency in the first wave – though not with such vehemence that he would have to resign if it happened. Gordon Brown gets a bit cross behind the scenes. But the headlines stick, especially in an approving Euro-sceptic press, and the impression is allowed to run that Labour wouldn't go in during the first wave. Labour might well not go in a first wave, though there is no sign that Tony Blair has made up his mind on the issue. The headlines may be helpful now, but they carry a danger, too: if Labour did want to go in with the first wave, it would be all the more difficult to condition public opinion to the idea in the short time that will be available after the election.

This is only an example: EMU isn't the only show in town, though it is the one recently preoccupying Europe to the exclusion of most others. But it illustrates a larger and, perhaps, counter-intuitive point: that Labour's best response is attack rather than defence. It's not just that it cannot outflank the Tories in Europe.

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Until last weekend, I'd always associated the sound of silence with crap scansion and rhythmical word-throttling ("Because a vision soft-see-see once-pling! Left its seeds while I wot-hos sleep-pling") and nothing more. How wrong I was.

The scene was Sainsbury's at 10.55 on Sunday morning. I was halfway down the Cereals aisle, trying to persuade my small son (whose requirements in the breakfast department are as rigorous as a Muslim on Death Row) that he couldn't have the Nesquik Wheaties packet with the free Crazy Straw inside, when the Tunnay went bing-bong. "Has it is Rebebrance Sudday," announced an unseen but adenoidal shelf-stacker. "We hobe our customers will join us in observt two minutes of silence at heleven o'clock." Oh right, we thought, silence – and continued arguing with the children and consuming away, amid the Cheerios and Strawberry Jammies. Four minutes later, the adenoidal youth was back, inglorious and phlegm-drenched but insistent, calling for silence.

And miles from the Canotaph, and the party leaders looking grimly earnest and what Larkin called "soppy-sterz", miles from the royal wreath-laying, miles from the veterans' medals and marching crowds, miles from the rain along Whitehall and the grey skies under which melancholy knots of Britons awkwardly grouped around war memorials from Orkney to Over Wallop, miles from processions and churches and barracks, there, in the most brightly-lit, egregiously modern, flagrantly unpoetic environment you could find on a Sunday morning, there among the rows of dog food and pasta sauces, an amazing thing happened. You could feel the silence spreading across the supermarket, like a great engine winding down. Shoppers who kept on walking were glared into immobility. Querulous children ("But why should I...?") were shushed. The rattle of baskets subsided. The check-out girls, on the point of asking those baffling questions about "Cashback", froze in mid-enquiry.

Shoppers proffering credit cards became statues. Right across 24 aisles, from red bananas to white Bordeaux, everything stopped. It wasn't silence exactly, more a kind of

enchantment that settled on us like the magic dust in *The Sleeping Beauty*. I found myself staring dementedly at a packet of Nestlé's Cinnamon Toast Crunch, as though meditating on a rainbow. MacNeice's poem came into my head: "God, or whatever means the good/ Be praised that time can stop like this..." It wasn't about remembering the war; it was about locating the peace.

In 1975 there was a shocking, gratuitously violent and controversial movie called *Jaws*, about a Long Island beach resort being terrorised by a man-eating shark. The film's notoriety wholly eclipsed a fine but less sensational production that came out in the same month called *Jews*.



about a Long Island beach resort being terrorised by a man-eating *seffile* fish. Much nicer, but, tragically, nobody wanted to go see it. Later there was *Reservoir Dogs*, a shocking, gratuitously violent and controversial film about some American hoodlums in black suits coming to blows in a deserted warehouse. Yeah, it was good, but not a patch on *Reservoir Dogs*, a little-seen movie about some Venetian grandees in midnight-blue tuxes arguing about which of them should get free passes to the Lido. It was refreshingly free of swearing and

dismemberment, but was sadly ignored. Now, I notice, there's a fuss about *Crash*, a shocking, gratuitously etc film based on J G Ballard's novel about ghastly people who get a sexual thrill out of imagining themselves deliberately crashing into a car driven by Jayne Mansfield. Everyone's calling for it to be banned. It would be a shame if all the attendant celebrity were to overshadow an earlier work of Mr Ballard's called *Crèche*, about some ghastly people who get a perverse thrill out of abandoning their children in a supermarket play area, so they can whizz unencumbered around the aisles, hoping to collide trolleys with their local MP and tell them about the need to ban movies they haven't seen because they know – they really know – what people want to watch in the cinema...

Great encounters of our time. Two giants of the interview circuit ran into each other, apparently for the first time, on Saturday at the launch party of Redmond O'Hanlon's *Congo Journey*, the twinkle-eyed, spectacled zoologist's crazed foray into the heart of Nowheresville in search of the Lost Dinosaur of Lake Tlé. The party was at Pelican House, O'Hanlon's Oxfordshire mansion, and featured a Redmondian slew of literati (Salman Rushdie, Julian Barnes, Will Self, Craig Raine) and scientists (Richard Dawkins, Jonathan Kingdon). Martin Amis couldn't come because he and Isabel Fonseca had just had a baby (Fernanda) but Ian McEwan managed to jet over from the swamps of Louisiana, where they're currently filming his story *First Love Last Rites* (it's set, as far as I remember, in Clapham). Galen Strawson, the Oxford philosopher, had a brief conversation with his old student Will Self, the saurian gourmet, and suffered a crippling anxiety attack immediately afterwards. The scientists looked on with faint distaste as the arty tendency flew around kissing each other unhygienically.

Wondering what exactly scientists talk about when off duty, a friend overheard Professor Tim Halliday, an expert on the sex life of the newt, and discovered him talking about – just that ("It's all a matter of whip, fan, flash

You could feel the silence spreading across the supermarket, like a great engine winding down

john walsh

and sniff. Then the male drops a sperm package, which the female...") And in the midst of it all, Terry Wogan ran into Jeremy Paxman for the first time. Instant mutual admiration, apparently.

The London animal world has been behaving rather oddly of late. Next week, my old chum Roy Hattersley appears before Bow Street magistrates, accused of letting his bull terrier, Buster, off the leash in St James's Park, whereupon he (Buster, obviously) savaged a greylag goose in a blizzard of feathers and entrails. "I know he chased it," admits the ashen-faced former Labour deputy, in defence of his murderous pet, "but I don't understand why it didn't fly away. That's what birds are supposed to do." And all week the papers have been full of menacing, street-wise foxes in south London, where one has been spotted climbing into an infant's buggy and allegedly biting its face. Indeed, if you believe the tabloids, their new urban identity had emboldened foxes to the point where they're likely to mug you for the price of a kebab, steal your car and drive around in back-to-front headgear looking for trouble. This is not what they're

supposed to do. My road in Dulwich is regularly patrolled by a brace of foxes, but they never show signs of wanting to climb on anything except a bin and each other. What intrigues me about the bitten-baby story is the insistence of a chap called Trevor Williams, of the Fox Project, that the child's injuries "are totally inconsistent with a fox-bite... They sound much more like a cat's scratch." So, let me get this straight, Inspector. When the Norbury fox was found sitting on the scratched baby, it didn't mean the fox was responsible for the scratches; it meant a cat had done the evil deed, then scurpered leaving the fox holding, as it were, the smoking gun... Bloody hell. Non-operational greylag geese, innocent fall-guy foxes and infanticidal pussies. Time to call in Redmond O'Hanlon...



Targeting the new proletariat

The working class has completely vanished from the political vocabulary. What was once called "the proletariat" – perceived as an active agent of its own future – has marched off the stage forever.

In old black-and-white movies, you can still get a sense of what the expression used to conjure up: crowds on a grey day outside a football stadium, workers in their hundreds on the picket line at the factory gate. Now it has all dissolved into history.

The people, of course, are still somewhere to be found. There hasn't been a holocaust of the cloth-capped section of the population. At the bottom end, they have simply been renamed, becoming the unemployed, the underprivileged, the poor. These are the code-names for the victims of our times, those no longer seen as actors capable of changing the direction of their own drama.

Higher up the ladder, the senior echelons of the proletariat have been transmogrified into an intriguing and potentially dangerous end-of-century phenomenon, the endlessly expanded middle class – now the chief participant in the unrolling scenarios of all the political parties in the West.

The presence of this populist middle ground, ideologically unattached, is hardly a new phenomenon. In Latin America, huge Catholic parties, such as the Christian Democrats in Chile, once occupied this central position, as did the authoritarian "labourist" movement of General Perón (pictured right) and his successors in Argentina. Such parties embraced a disparate collection of trades and interest groups, familiar in Britain in the composition of the old Liberal Party: small farmers rather than great landowners, small businesses rather than large corporations, and a sprinkling of the professions.

But large chunks of the populist clientele came from the upwardly mobile and unionised working class, as well as from the ranks of the public sector: the teachers, the health workers, the middle management of the great nationalised industries, even the junior officers in the armed forces.

The lineaments of a political phenomenon that once looked absolutely familiar in Latin America can now be traced out in the British landscape. The coalition of forces that the Liberals once called their own has become – vastly expanded – the area to which Labour and Conservatives pay most attention. And with reason,



Could middle-class insecurity open the way to a British version of right-wing populism, asks Richard Gott

because at the very moment when this group is growing larger and politically ever more significant, it is also becoming dramatically squeezed – by falling incomes and eroded prestige. The old question of the proletarianisation of the middle class is now high up on the political agenda. The Labour Party must be hoping that this ideologically unanchored group in society will move in their direction. Yet it could equally well drift to the extreme right.

Anecdotal, everyone is familiar with the problem. At the very moment when large numbers of people are out of work, those in work have to work twice as hard, long hours, evenings spilling into weekends, uncertainties about the future, the need to run ever faster to stand in the same place – these are the common experiences of almost every workplace. For women, in particular, the endless juggling of work and home – the family, the school and the shopping cen-

tre – creates a sense of oppression undreamt of by earlier generations. This experience of exploitation and uncertainty forms the background of several recent studies on the culture and oppressions of work. Charles Handy, pioneer of "upside-down thinking", has specifically targeted the employees of large corporations, explaining to them what they already sense – that their world is changing dramatically. "Like the centrally planned economies of the old communist world," he writes in *The Age of Unreason*, "these centrally planned organisations are also discovering... that the old ways that worked quite well in the past are no longer cost-effective." They have been obliged to rethink the way they get work done.

Anthony Sampson, in his book on the internal crisis of the corporations, *Company Man*, published last year, depicts the fate of the vic-

tims of reshaped capitalism in tragic tones. The "company man", once upheld as the most significant social creation of the 20th century, is now perceived as "the most vulnerable" member of the middle class, liable to be cast on the scrapheap at any moment – when once he had a job for life.

"Behind all the language of downsizing and reducing head counts," writes Sampson, "were individual human tragedies which received little publicity or sympathy. Dignified figures in the office suddenly found themselves no longer noticed or valued as they were ousted by highly paid young upstarts; they could be asked to clear their desk in a morning, and be shut out from the building which had been their village for half their lifetime."

While the collapse of Communism and of the Soviet Union clearly marked an end to the era of the big state bureaucracies, it also seems to have prefigured, in some strange symbiotic way, the end of the large capitalist corporation as well. Nor is the "company man" alone. His fate has been paralleled within the institutional ruins of the nationalised industries and the welfare state. The serried ranks of Nupie and Nalga, the ill-paid membership of the public service unions, have undergone similar experiences in the past decade, with very little in terms of a financial cushion.

Middle management has also suffered. There was a time when a job in the state sector brought a certain sense of status – working for the public good, with perhaps a medal at the end to make up for a meagre salary. Now those insubstantial rewards have gone.

The present sense of economic insecurity and social uncertainty among the middle class might in theory lead it towards a progressive politics. Yet its chief characteristic at present is an acute distrust of the political system. Its political alienation is just as likely to fuel a populism of the right. Britain has been relatively protected from the growth of right-wing movements elsewhere, but there is no guarantee that we will not see the emergence of a home-grown Jean-Marie Le Pen, or Jörg Haider, or Newt Gingrich.

Any fresh political programme in the post-socialist era will, of course, have to build on popular discontents wherever they are to be found. But if the left does not try to locate them and remedy them – and perceive that both labour and capital are in trouble – the task will certainly fall to the right.



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Football moneyspinner: Murdoch team in pay-per-view talks with clubs as league chief's £100,000 bonus is revealed

Premiership set for £10-a-match BSkyB deal

Mathew Horsman and Patrick Toohy

BSkyB executives are holding informal talks with several top football clubs about introducing pay-per-view broadcasts of live Premiership games as early as next year.

The talks, which are still at an early stage, could see Saturday matches transmitted on a pay-as-you-go basis at £10 a time, generating millions for Sky and the Premiership. Currently, only Sunday and Monday matches are televised live on the Sky Sports channel.

Meanwhile, it emerged last night that Premiership chief executive Rick Parry, who negotiated the recently agreed four-year, £670m exclusive pay-TV deal, was paid a bonus of more than £100,000 upon its signing. The broadcast contract, however, has not yet been ratified by all the clubs.

Under the contract, which only covers subscription television rights and runs from the start of next season, the Premiership agreed to discuss the introduction of pay-per-view after two years. But sources at the league said last night there was nothing to stop earlier moves to the new format.

"Pay-per-view is always an option," said a spokesman for the league. "It is an on-going part of the present and new contracts, but no date has been set for its introduction and it can't be done without the blessing of the Premiership." He said no deal was being sought at the moment.

According to football and broadcasting sources, the early move to pay-per-view is being driven in part by fears that the Restrictive Practices Court could intervene, insisting that the exclusive deal be torn up, and replaced with contracts between Sky and individual clubs.

Sky is keen to ensure it retains rights to British football, which has been the prime engine of its spectacular growth in the UK market. According to the most recent figures, there are 5.65 million Sky subscribers, of whom two-thirds take the premium sports channels.

Premiership chairmen are also seeking to develop the pay-per-view market as soon as possible to cash in on revenues that could exceed £2.5bn a year. It is understood that top clubs, including Newcastle and Manchester United, are leading efforts to build a pay-per-view market as soon as possible.

Man United alone could earn as much as £90m a season, even after it splits the revenues with Sky. "The sooner it happens, the better off everybody is going to be," a source close to the club said yesterday.

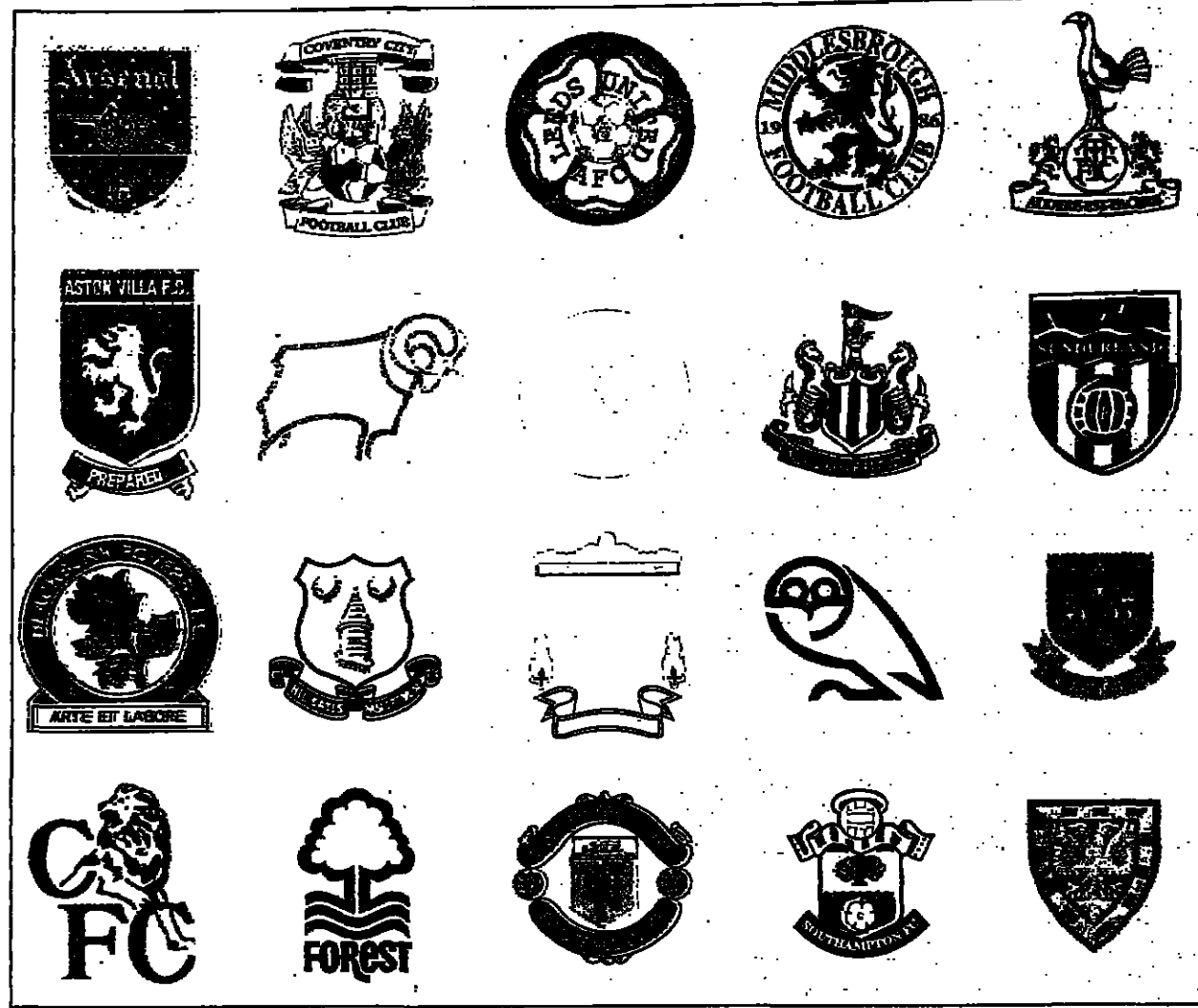
Early results from France, where pay-per-view football was introduced this season, suggest take-up rates can reach as high as 20 per cent of subscribers equipped to receive the service.

The success of Sky's early experiments with pay-per-view, including last weekend's contest between Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield, was also being seen by both Sky and the Premiership as proof that British viewers are willing to pay extra for premium sporting events. More than 420,000 paid up to £14.95 to watch the fight.

On the existing analogue system, where capacity remains limited, full-scale pay-per-view movies and sport would be difficult to accommodate. However, selected football matches, for instance crucial league games, could be shown on a digital basis late this season.

Next year, Sky intends to launch its digital satellite service, offering up to 200 channels, of which perhaps 60 will be reserved for pay-per-view services.

If the court rules against the current contract, other broadcasters could return to the fray, seeking their own deals with the Premiership. The court is expected to decide by summer.



Pay up for the Premiership: Clubs are talking informally with BSkyB about pay-per-view deals to broadcast matches

Chelsea in talks to raise £30m

Nigel Cope

Chelsea Village, the parent company of Chelsea football club, said yesterday that it is in talks with several parties to secure £30m of fresh financing. The funds will be used to continue the development of the club's West London ground, Stamford Bridge.

The development work includes a new west stand, a sports and leisure centre, a hotel and a railway station near the ground. Negotiations are continuing with Railtrack over a Stamford Bridge station.

The club declined to say yesterday whether the fund-raising discussions were with individuals or institutional investors.

However, Chelsea's group secretary, Alan Shaw, said: "The discussions have gone past the preliminary stages and one would hope they would be concluded relatively quickly."

Mr Shaw said it was not yet clear if any shares in Chelsea would change hands.

Ken Bates, the club's chairman, holds a significant stake. Matthew Harding, the vice chairman and benefactor who was killed in a helicopter crash last month, controlled 25 per cent.

The news of the £30m fund-raising will be a big boost to the club, which was rocked by Harding's death. The loss cast doubt on Chelsea's ability to complete the revamp of Stamford Bridge.

The club suffered a boardroom bust-up last week, which saw the resignation of director Peter Middleton, head of Solomon Brothers' European operations.

Mr Bates said yesterday that Mr Middleton, a former chief executive of Lloyd's of London, had "dejected of grandeur".

Chelsea Village shares closed up 2p at 119.5p. The shares were floated at 55p.

Falling jobless figure alarms markets

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The number of people claiming unemployment benefit fell by more than 40,000 last month to 2,030,000, the lowest for five and a half years. The headline total is almost certain to fall below the symbolic 2 million level within the next month or two.

Even though the official figure understates the true level of joblessness, the undeniable evidence that the labour market is getting tighter alarmed the financial markets. They reckon that base rates will have to rise again, although opinions were divided about whether this would be before or after the election.

Minutes of the 23 September meeting between Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, confirmed yesterday that the Bank had started to press

for higher rates a month before the Chancellor agreed.

A further rise in interest rates, following the quarter point rise earlier this month, would trigger a round of mortgage increases. The Nationwide on Tuesday became the first big lender to increase its standard mortgage rate.

The gilts market weakened yesterday, weighed down by yesterday's evidence of the fizzle in the economy and the fear that today's inflation figures will show the target measure climbing above 3 per cent. Sterling gained more than 2 pence to end at DM2.4921.

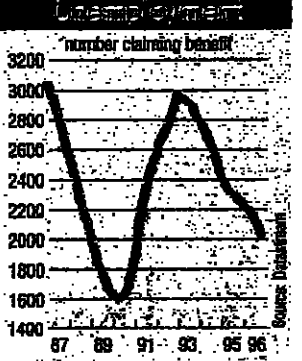
The fall in the unemployment count in October was much bigger than expected. The Office for National Statistics said about 10,000-15,000 of the drop was due to the introduction of the Job Seekers' Allowance and will be reversed.

But even allowing for that distortion, there was a broad-

based fall in the number of claimants that exceeded the recent trend. The total not adjusted for seasonal variations crept below 2 million to 1,977,000.

The number of claimants was lower in all regions and for men and women. It has declined across all age groups, and long-term unemployment also fell.

Other figures for vacancies,



manufacturing, employment and earnings painted the same picture of a buoyant jobs market. The number of vacancies advertised in JobCentres last month, although exaggerated by a new computer system, returned to the highest level since May 1988.

An extra 13,000 jobs were created in manufacturing industry in September, taking the level of employment in the sector to its highest for nearly four years.

The underlying increase in average earnings remained at 4 per cent in the year to September. However, actual earnings growth climbed to 4.6 per cent, the fastest rate of increase since the end of 1992.

Although the official claimant count underestimates the number unemployed - by around 150,000 compared to the total on the international definition of unemployment - the general picture of a rapid fall in unemployment and a slower

climb in employment has become clear.

"The economy is steaming," said Paul Mortimer-Lee, chief economist at investment bank Paribas, predicting a base rate increase in January.

Geoffrey Dicks at NatWest Markets agreed but said: "There's an election coming up. The Chancellor will hold off." At the 23 September monetary meeting Mr George argued for a quarter-point increase and said a delay might make it necessary to tighten policy more sharply.

The Bank's Inflation Report last week warned that another move would be needed at some stage.

A few City economists remain unconvinced of the need for higher rates but think we might get them anyway. "Inflation is benign and growth is around trend. I would be surprised if the Chancellor were to raise rates again, but with the Bank piling on the pressure he might," said Simon Briscoe at Nikko.

Hambros claims investors' support

Peter Rodgers
Financial Editor

Hambros said yesterday it believed its shareholders were staying loyal to the board in the face of a campaign to force a break-up led by Jim Mellon, chief executive of Regent Pacific, the Hong Kong investment group.

Sir Chips Keswick, Hambros chief executive, said: "We have seen no sign of support for Mr Mellon's suggestions."

Regent, which last contacted Hambros by phone just over a week ago, owns 3 per cent of the group and said last month it was meeting other shareholders to put its case. It has been pressing for a sale of the Hambros Countrywide estate agency and financial services offshoot and other subsidiaries, but Sir Chips dismissed this. "We are builders, not breakers," he said.

Sir Chips is to become chairman next July when Lord Hambro retires, but the chief executive post is not going to be filled. Sir Chips said he would be a "full-time working chairman" rather than chairman and chief executive.

Michael Sorkin, a deputy chairman responsible for the investment group, and Charles Perrin, chief executive of the banking subsidiary, will continue to report to Sir Chips when he becomes chairman. The funds business has £7bn under management.

Sir Chips was announcing a return to the black at Hambros, with a profit for the half year to September of £35m before tax, compared with a loss of £7.7m a year ago. The swing was helped by a sharp fall in bad debt provisions to £5.9m from £24.6m a year ago.

Investment column, page 23

33 staff sacked as Diamond restructures BZW

Jill Treanor

BZW yesterday sacked 33 people from its back office, sales, trading and secretarial staff as part of the radical restructuring of its global markets operation under Bob Diamond.

The sackings came hard on the heels of the departure of several senior executives following a strategic review by Mr Diamond, the recently appointed chief executive of global markets.

Klaus-Peter Moeritz, head of foreign exchange trading in the UK and Europe, also left

yesterday. He was originally recruited by Alex von Ungem-Stenberg, the deputy chief executive of the markets division who resigned on Monday.

Mr Diamond, who joined BZW in July on a remuneration package that could net him more than £5m in the next few years, yesterday hired Paul Thrush, former head of foreign exchange at Nationsbank, to head of foreign exchange. He replaces Mr Moeritz, but assumes a wider role.

The global markets division is receiving the brunt of the re-

structuring of the entire BZW group taking place under Bill Harrison, who was poached from Robert Fleming and took over as chief executive in September.

Senior executives who have left include Yann Gindler, head of debt origination, Nick Carter, head of swaps marketing, Paul Ellis, head of structured products, and Rob Jolliffe and Steve Honesjo, heads of debt syndicate.

Mr Harrison said yesterday: "We are going through something of a change here [in the

markets division]. That business is the one which has been through the most change in the last few months."

He is in the process of dividing BZW into three main divisions - markets under Mr Diamond, equities under Steve Harker and a newly created investment banking division, which will soon be without a chief executive as Graham Fimlott is due to become head of strategic planning for the entire Barclays group.

In addition, Mr Harrison has set up a capital markets unit run

by Amir Eilon, who already works for BZW.

Mr Harrison said: "We've got equity capital markets, debt capital markets, structured products, and global derivatives. What we've done is bring that together and that reports in to the investment banking, equities and the markets business. We will have our financing products co-ordinated in such a way we can look at financing products for clients across all our client range."

Investment banking has also been restructured so that "all of

our major clients will have the benefit of whole range of activities in a co-ordinated way", Mr Harrison said.




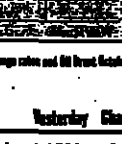
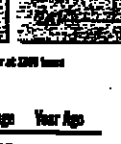
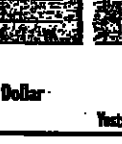
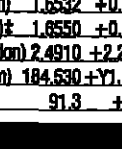
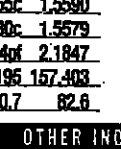
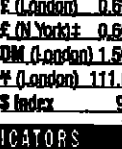
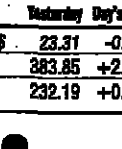
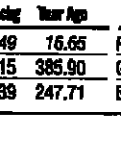
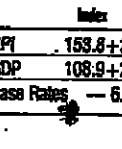
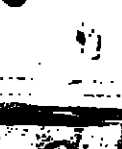
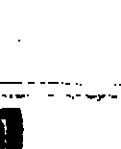
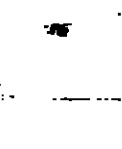






"I've got some very hard-working, capable people. We just want to make sure we are serving our people in the right way. There are no short cuts to that."

Mr Harrison yesterday hired Roger Davis, a former colleague from Robert Fleming, to become chief executive of BZW in Asia. That role was vacated by John Richardson, who quit last week.

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
FTSE 100	3826.90	-7.40	-0.2	4073.10	3632.30
FTSE 250	4410.20	+5.40	+0.1	4588.60	4015.30
FTSE 350	1961.20	-2.30	-0.1	2022.10	1816.60
FTSE SmallCap	2161.57	+1.93	+0.1	2244.36	1954.08
FTSE All-Share	1936.77	-2.02	-0.1	1994.54	1791.95
Nikkei	6262.31	-3.73	-0.1	6268.04	5032.94
Dow Jones	20879.44	-226.99	-1.1	22686.80	19734.70
Hong Kong	12943.69	+137.38	+1.1	12943.69	10904.87
Frankfurt	2773.43	+38.13	+1.4	2773.43	2253.36

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Short sterling			UK medium gilt		
Index	1 Month	1 Year	Index	1 Month	1 Year
UK	6.06	6.68	7.80	7.71	7.93
US	5.31	5.59	6.22	5.86	6.29
Japan	0.38	0.63	2.82	2.72	-
Germany	5.91	3.25	5.86	6.30	6.75

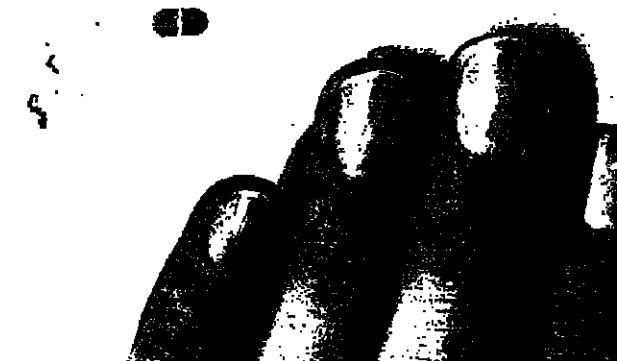
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48-hour rule won't change the way we do business



COMMENT

'It is difficult to see the directive changing anything at all in well-run, efficient companies that do not compel their employees to work longer hours than they want'

Since journalists are exempt from the Working Time Directive, having been mysteriously classed among the "essential workers" to whom it should not apply, we are more than qualified to comment on the matter from a wholly impartial point of view.

A veritable forest of misinformation has appeared in the 48 hours since the European Court of Justice announced its ruling against Britain, truth being one of the first casualties of any war with Brussels. One of the more impressive is the Institute of Directors' unsubstantiated estimate that it will cost British industry £12bn. But there have also been some telling facts and one of them is that 6 million employees – a quarter of the working population – are exempt along with media types, ranging from bus drivers, trawlermen and trainee doctors to managing directors and domestic servants.

As many as 4 million people may now be working more than 48 hours. However, the more important statistic, according to the British Chambers of Commerce, is that 91 per cent of these do so voluntarily. Nothing in the directive will change that.

Indeed, it is difficult to see the directive changing anything at all in well-run, efficient companies that do not compel their employees to work longer hours than they want – something accepted by the Confederation of British Industry despite its belligerent noises.

The idea that the directive is in some way back-door social engineering forced on Britain in breach of its opt-out from Maa-

tricht, is likewise hard to sustain. Britain approved and endorsed the European legislation under which the directive has been introduced long before the opt-out from Maastricht became an issue.

As Peter Sutherland, the chairman of Goldman Sachs and former director general of GATT, observed earlier this week, those who oppose the Working Time Directive, and the Social Chapter and indeed a single currency on grounds of sovereignty are questioning Britain's membership of the European Union. Sovereignty was ceded when Mrs Thatcher signed the Single European Act.

Appearing to be told how to run their companies by a court based in Luxembourg understandably sticks in the craw of most businessmen. But they should bear in mind that the more the EU is treated like an *à la carte* menu, the more they risk playing into the hands of those who would pull Britain out altogether or leave it hopelessly marginalised. That would be a true cause for calamity.

Now why did Lord Stevens of Ludgate choose to reveal his reduced role at United News and Media (he'll be stepping down as executive chairman at the annual general meeting next year to become part-time chairman) via the medium of an exclusive interview with the *Financial Times*, published yesterday? It's called news management,

something which, as a long-serving newspaper proprietor, Lord Stevens ought to know a thing or two about.

Knowing this newspaper and others to be pursuing the rumour that Lord Hollick was trying to force him to accept a reduced role, salary and expenses, Lord Stevens plainly thought it would be better to get his side of the story out first through the time-honoured method of a selective leak. He was right.

What we got was the usual guff about not wanting to go on for ever, having other things to do, etc. etc. The FT gave him as warm a send-off as he could have hoped for and in the process he defused the rest of the pack. Unfortunately his action was also perilously close to being illegal. The Financial Services Act specifically forbids through the Stock Exchange listing rules the partial release of price-sensitive information, even when those doing the leaking are not making any money out of it.

It seems that when it comes to company affairs, the black arts of spin have become a mighty dangerous thing. But for the fact that the rules are ambiguous on a decision of this sort, and that United shares, although firmly up on the news, did not move even a penny, United would have been in trouble. As it is, the Stock Exchange is rushing through a change in the rules to close the loophole. From now on the selective leaking even of information as apparently innocuous as a director's decision to stand down will be barred.

It might be tempting to think of this as further evidence of the way regulation and bureaucracy is swamping the City and commerce.

But it would be wrong to do so. It is all very well and jolly nice to be the recipient of a selective leak, whether you are a newspaper or a dealer, but it doesn't make for fair and efficient markets. As for manipulating the press, good luck to him. Lord Stevens certainly succeeded in outmanoeuvring us. We had a scoop and he deprived us of it.

It is hard to exaggerate the anxious concern in the City over the software teething problems of Crest, the City's new share settlement system. Crest was set up by the Bank of England to replace the Stock Exchange's ill-fated Taurus clearing system. Now an independent company, Crest announced last week that it was delaying the entry of a number of FTSE 100 companies to early next year to give a breathing space while the problems are sorted out.

Crest's board is to meet at the end of the month to have another look at progress. One of the options is to reduce further the rate at which companies transfer to the system. That would delay full operation beyond the target date of next April.

Some firms believe there is now a real danger of the system failing, for example if there is heavy trading after the Halifax is floated

next year, unless there is a radical and complete overhaul of the software. If there were the remotest prospect of that, the Securities and Investments Board would have to intervene, because of the threat to the health of securities firms of any serious settlement delay.

Some firms go further, and say that delaying a few more companies' entry into Crest is not enough. Instead they believe the commissioning programme should be suspended altogether while Crest is sorted out. That means the winding down of the old Taurus settlement system would have to be put on hold, to avoid total chaos. The loss of face for the City and especially for the Bank would be hard to bear, so soon after the Taurus fiasco.

Whether all this is exaggeration or not, it is nonetheless symptomatic of extreme, widespread and very real concern. Crest is not yet operating at more than 25 per cent of capacity.

If it is having severe software problems now, what's it going to be like when it runs at full steam? Claims that it knows how to put the problems right are greeted with justified scepticism.

One of the problems is that Crest has simply not given customers enough information to convince them that the software can be put right. Unless Crest can reassure customers soon, it will face open rebellion from the brokers, companies, registrars and investors who the system is set up to serve.

Inquiry into United's part-time chairman

Matthew Horsman
Media Editor

The Stock Exchange is planning to tighten rules on the disclosure of material changes to the role of company directors, after confirmation yesterday that Lord Stevens, the chairman of United News & Media, will work only part-time from next spring.

News of Lord Stevens' plans, revealed in an interview in the *Financial Times*, was the subject of Stock Exchange 'inquiries' yesterday into whether the company should have issued a formal statement about the chairman's diminished managerial role.

United's shares rose 11p on the news, receding later in the day to close at 68.5p, up 7.5p. According to a senior regulator, United would have been obliged to make a statement to the market had a new rule, to be implemented on Monday, been in effect this week.

The rule will state that "any important change in the functions or executive responsibilities of a director" must be notified as soon as it is decided.

Changes to Lord Stevens' job will result in a sharp reduction in his £510,000 annual salary and generous expense account.

Lord Hollick, the chief executive, was believed to have been seeking such an outcome for some months.

Up until now United has consistently refused to comment publicly on the matter, even going so far as to deny the plans outright in off-the-record comments recorded by *The Independent* just prior to the publication of the *Financial Times* interview.

The Stock Exchange formally gave consideration yesterday to whether the leaking of the news constituted partial disclosure, which might have been against the rules.

Confirmation that Lord Stevens will work only part-time from May is believed to be a first step toward his eventual resignation from the company.

Sources close to United claimed last night that Lord Stevens had a "lavish lifestyle and a generous expense account".

One source said: "David Stevens knew it was time the gravy train came to an end. He was one of the last true Fleet Street spenders."

United declined to comment on the level of Lord Stevens' expenses, or on suggestions that he would be paid just £150,000 a year in his part-time position. Information on his new salary would only be publicly available



Lavish lifestyle: Lord Stevens' £510,000 annual salary and expense account will be cut

when the next annual report was published, a company spokesman said.

A source close to company said "a drop in his remuneration would be only natural in line with his changed duties".

Lord Hollick is widely viewed as the key architect of United's

strategy, while Lord Stevens' role has been increasingly marginal.

Under Lord Hollick's leadership, United has recently expanded further in the exhibitions sector, with its £592m purchase of Blenheim, and taken a 20 per cent stake

in ITV, the ITV company, in a step most observers believe will lead to a full bid.

"The fact that the share price rose on this news is proof the market sides more with Lord Hollick than with Lord Stevens," one leading media analyst said yesterday.

East Midlands agrees £1.3bn Dominion bid

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

The long awaited takeover bid for East Midlands Electricity finally materialised yesterday when the regional electricity firm recommended a £1.3bn cash offer from Dominion Resources, the US utility company.

But there were growing doubts in the markets that this latest bid, and last month's £766m offer from US-owned CE Electric for Northern Electric, would be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. "This dramatically increases the chances of an MMC reference," a leading electricity analyst said last night.

The fears kept East Midlands shares well below the 670p offer price. The shares closed 11.5p higher at 622.5p. Shares in Northern Electric slipped a further 15p to 593.5p. If both bids go through, it would bring to five the number of regional electricity suppliers owned by American companies.

In addition, it would leave just three of the 12 privatised regional electricity companies still in independent hands with separate stock market listings: London, Yorkshire and Southern. One theory is that the regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild, will ask for the bids to be blocked because he would have too few quoted companies to use to make share price comparisons.

Thomas Capps, Dominion's chairman, and Norman Askew, chief executive of East Midlands, spoke to Professor Littlechild on the phone yesterday. However Mr Capps had earlier insisted he saw no reason his bid should be referred to the MMC. "We see no reason for it and

UK electricity takeover bids since privatisation

Bidder	Target	Date	Price	Status
Trafalgar House	Northern Electric	Dec 94	£1.2bn	Bid Lapsed
Scottish Power	Manweb	July 95	£2.4bn	Successful
Hanson	Eastern Electricity	July 95	£2.4bn	Successful
North West Water	Norweb	Sept 95	£1.8bn	Successful
Southern company	SWEB	Sept 95	£1.1bn	Successful
PowerGen	Midlands Electricity	Sept 95	£1.95bn	Blocked by DTI
National Power	Southern Electric	Oct 95	£2.8bn	Blocked by DTI
Central and South West	Seaboard	Nov 95	£900m	Successful
Welsh Water	Swalec	Dec 95	£900m	Successful
Avon Energy Partners	Midlands Electricity	May 96	£1.7bn	Successful
CE Electric	Northern Electric	Oct 96	£766m	Contested
Dominion Resources	East Midlands Electricity	Nov 96	£1.3bn	Agreed

we don't think it will. There's plenty of data out there," Mr Capps said.

Dominion directors, who will visit East Midlands' Nottingham offices for the first time today, claimed to have bold ambitions for the group. They are likely to encourage the planned expansion into the domestic gas and electricity in the rest of the UK when competition arrives in 1998.

Mr Askew disclosed that East Midlands would be selling to homes in parts of the south of England in competition trials in the new year. Mr Capps said the UK was further ahead by five or six years in introducing utility competition. "The UK is a good learning laboratory for us," he said.

In addition, East Midlands could launch a range of mortgage and consumer credit products, which Dominion sells in the US. Linwood Robertson, the group's senior vice-president, claimed Dominion was one of the largest providers of new mortgages in the US. He explained: "Obviously it's some-

thing we need to think about in the UK."

However, both companies said the deal would have no impact on jobs, which are likely to face further cuts in an on-going restructuring programme. East Midlands' workforce has almost halved from 8,634 in 1993 to about 4,500 today.

Dominion had confirmed it was considering making an offer for East Midlands last week but said at the time it was not prepared to pay much more than 608p a share. Talks aimed at securing a recommended offer lasted through Tuesday night, with both sides agreeing they had arrived at a fair price.

The company had already given away 26p to shareholders in the form of a special dividend worth £1.20 and its share of the stake in the National Grid of £1.46p a share.

Mr Capps said: "We bargained hard and they bargained hard. I don't think they stole it and I don't think they gave it away." City analysts broadly agreed that the price was reasonable.

SIB speeds up pensions review

Nic Cicutti

The Securities and Investments Board moved yesterday to revive its faltering pensions mis-selling review by announcing that it was simplifying the way insurance companies obtain information needed to process cases.

The SIB initiative came as the Personal Investment Authority, the frontline regulator responsible for ensuring the review is carried out, formally admitted that barely 24,000 cases had been assessed of the 446,000 identified as priorities.

Only 6,227 people have been offered redress, worth a total of £50m. Of the 58,000 priority cases identified by independent financial advisers, redress has been offered to 561 and accepted by 99.

Joe Palmer, chairman of the

PIA, said: "The measures outlined today should enable firms to increase their rate of progress significantly. PIA will be concentrating its attention on those firms with the most to do."

The SIB initiative is aimed at clearing a serious information log-jam, which insurers claim has prevented them from assessing the losses incurred by the vast bulk of cases so far identified.

Until now, pension providers have relied on a questionnaire jointly devised by the Association of British Insurers (ABI) and the National Association of Pension Funds (NAFF), the insurers' and pension schemes trade bodies.

However, both sides have complained that the questions were far too detailed and involved their staff in meaningless statistical exercise.

SIB's paper says that insurers can now make rough calculations based on a pension scheme's information booklet, plus simple additional information. Instead of asking 200 questions, insurers will now have to ask only eight.

The regulator claimed that, while not totally accurate, the new system, devised by accountancy firm Price Waterhouse, was not biased towards life companies or policyholders. A separate validation by consultants Lane Clark & Peacock backs SIB's assertion.

The proposals were welcomed by the NAFF and the ABI as an important contribution to resolving the mis-selling scandal, more than two years after a review first identified the problem. The British Bankers' Association, many of whose members have sold personal

pensions, also backed the SIB plan.

However, both Legal & General and Chambers Townsend Consultancy, a provider of pension redress systems to life companies, warned reinstatement would still pose a problem even after estimates of actual losses were made. Pension schemes are likely to require far more detailed information before re-admitting former members, it was claimed.

If so, the log-jam would break only to re-assemble a few months down the line while increasing pressure on the regulator to opt for a top-up to the personal pension instead, it was claimed.

Another big worry concerned the regulator's decision to force policyholders into becoming more involved in the compensation process than hitherto.

Telewest talks to Comcast UK about takeover

Matthew Horsman
Media Editor

Telewest, the country's second-largest cable operator, is in talks with rival company Comcast UK that could lead to an agreed takeover within weeks.

The move, which follows last month's four-way cable merger between Mercury, Nynex CableComms, Bell Cablemedia and Videotron to form Cable & Wireless Communications, now the country's largest operator, came as no surprise to analysts last night.

"Telewest was always going to be involved in the next wave of consolidation," said one media analyst. "And it was very likely to be an acquirer."

A spokesman for Telewest said: "We have no comment on any plans to acquire, merge or take over any company." Sources at Comcast also declined to comment.

Comcast shares rose 8 per cent in early trading on Nasdaq yesterday, in part on the company's improving financial performance.

Analyst said word of Telewest's interest had also percolated through the market.

Telewest shares cable franchises with Comcast in London, and has jointly developed marketing campaigns with the smaller company.

Comcast has 228,000 cable television subscribers and 239,000 residential telephony subscribers. It has investments in four franchises, including London, Cambridge and Birmingham, with a total potential reach of 1.6 million homes.

Analysts said last night that Comcast was an obvious target for Telewest, because of the franchises the companies share. They added that Telewest had been keen to regain the initiative in the cable industry, following the C&W deal which pushed Telewest into second position in the market.

General Cable, which is also thought to be a likely takeover target, could also figure on Telewest's wish list, although it is expected to fetch a higher price because it owns its franchises outright.

Telewest recently indicated it intended to take a leading role in developing the cable television market in the UK, following its agreement to support the rest of the industry in rejecting the controversial rate card offered by BSkyB for the supply of pay-television programming.

Telewest is believed to be leading preparations for the launch of pay-per-view movies on cable, in direct competition with BSkyB, which has well-developed plans for its own PPV movie service.

IN BRIEF

• The German economics ministry said it expected third-quarter GDP to have grown around a real 2 per cent from a year earlier. In its November monthly report, the ministry said GDP should also have risen "noticeably" from the second quarter in seasonally and calendar-adjusted terms. But it also said quarter-on-quarter growth would be lower than in the second quarter because of a normalisation of economic activity after the cold winter boosted GDP in the April to June period. Second-quarter GDP was 1.5 per cent higher than in the previous quarter and up 1.2 per cent year-on-year.

• Higher oil prices took prices at the factory gate in the US up by 0.4 per cent last month. But core prices, excluding food and energy, fell unexpectedly by 0.3 per cent. The news, which came as the Federal Reserve's Open Markets Committee was meeting to discuss interest rates, confirmed financial markets in the view that there would be no change in rates this month.

• France sold a 9.1 per cent stake in oil company Elf Aquitaine, raising about Fr10bn (£1.19bn) to help loss-making state-owned companies. The Finance Ministry said it sold 4.6 per cent of Elf, or 12.58 million shares, to institutional investors via Banque Paribas and SBC Warburg. It also sold 4.5 per cent, or 12.32 million shares, of France's largest oil company to Fininvest, a unit of Elf. The proceeds of the sale would go to a fund used to inject cash into ailing state-owned companies, the ministry said.

• Westinghouse Electric would spin off its industrial businesses as a publicly traded company next year to create a stand-alone company for its growing broadcasting operations, the company said. Westinghouse will take a \$125m fourth-quarter charge to cut 1,100 jobs in the industrial businesses prior to the spin-off. The company will also sell its Texas-based security systems business and offer the public up to a 20 per cent stake in Minneapolis-based Thermo King, its profitable transport-refrigeration unit.

• Chartered accountants could find themselves out of work or earning substantially less in 10 years' time because of an oversupply, according to a report published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants yesterday. The consultation document, called "Added-Value Professionals, Chartered Accountants in 2005", says that competition from inside and outside the accountancy profession will become much more intense, with chartered accountants over 45 particularly vulnerable to losing their jobs.

• Just under half of Britain's finance directors believe the public would be better served by setting up an outside regulatory body instead of continuing with the self-regulatory approach recently backed by the leading accountancy bodies, according to a survey by Reed Accountancy Personnel for *Accountancy Age* magazine, which was published today.

COMPETITION
GREAT FOR
BUSINESS
COME ON BT
A BIT MORE
COMPETITIVE

MERCURY
0800 5530601025

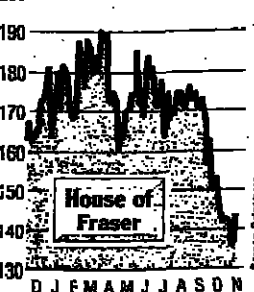
market report / shares

Data Bank

FTSE 100
3926.9 - 7.4
FTSE 250
4410.2 + 5.4
FTSE 350
1961.2 - 2.3
SEAQ VOLUME
852.8m shares,
34,624 bargains
Gilts Index
93.68 - 0.16

Share spotlight

share price, pence



House of Fraser takeover talk stirs lethargic punters

Taking Stock

A quiet, uneventful session usually spawns a few takeover bid stories as traders struggle to generate investment interest. With the stock market deep in pre-Budget lethargy, retailers found themselves the centre of attention and House of Fraser, the struggling department store chain, captured much of the speculation. The shares climbed 3p to 144.5p as stories continued to circulate that Burton, down 1.5p to 143p, was preparing an assault.

Burton is trading well and last week demonstrated its success with a 54 per cent profits jump to £151.6m. John Hoerner, called in as chief executive four years ago to turn round the then ailing group, declared: "This is not the beginning of the end; it is the end of the beginning."

With Debenhams, the group's department store chain thought to be squeezed for

space Fraser's 50 stores could look attractive. So a bid from Burton at least has the merit of logic. And Fraser looks vulnerable. Its shares have failed to perform. Floated at 180p 30 months ago they have been as low as 135.5p.

Last month it disclosed half-year losses of £13.6m and said it intended to close some of its stores. New management has been drafted in, led by John Coleman, a Texas Homecare veteran.

Sears, another retailer which has lost its way, added 2p to 89p in busy trading with Fraser said to be a possible target. But Sears is also seen as vulnerable to a break-up strike.

Next and Body Shop also made headway but once again Storehouse found the going difficult, falling 5.5p to 274p, a year's low. Interim profits are due next week. They are likely to emerge 8 per cent higher at



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

£36m before exceptional charges take their toll.

The market failed to hold early gains and spent the rest of the session drifting aimlessly. Fears of higher interest rates and a little selling in New York added to the Budget uncertainty.

With the debacle over the Crest computerised settlement system contributing to the air of indifference Footsie slipped 7.4 points to 3,926.9.

As the market closed there was a gentle buzz of excitement as a series of big trades went through. Turnover was lifted to a respectable 852.8 million with Hanson (71.62 million), British Gas (64.69 million),

Coolson (22.11 million) and BT (21.79 million) dominating the action as a series of delayed trades appeared on market screens.

There was speculation a big investment house had cut its equity exposure. Bed and breakfast deals, often responsible for big late trades, were not a significant feature of the activity.

British Gas flared 6p to 198.5p on UBS support, hopes of a North Sea settlement and lingering bid speculation. BT edged forward 1.5p to 360.5p, largely on NatWest Securities interest.

The investment house is, for the first time for 30 months,

positive, moving its stance from hold to add.

East Midlands Electricity, as the Dominion Resources bid duly arrived, rose 11.5p to 622.5p. Northern Ireland Electricity, not regarded as a prime takeover candidate, fell 9p to 357.5p as SBC Warburg said take profits.

Lasmo rose 8.5p to 210p. At a New York investment presentation chief executive Joe Darby said the group expected to produce 200,000 barrels of oil equivalent a day next year, a 12 per cent increase. The higher level should be maintained for five years.

Allied Domecq dipped a further 7p to 447p and Guinness strengthened 8p to 455.5p on continuing speculation about LVMH's 21 per cent stake.

Vendome, the luxury goods group, fell 16p to 544.5p as ABN Amro Hoare Govett trimmed its forecasts by 210m to £280m and £305m.

Granada gained 6.5p to 884.5p. Lehman Brothers believes the shares are a buy up to 950p. It expects year's results, due next week, to come out at £450.9m.

Smiths Industries, ahead of an institutional presentation hosted by Henderson Crosthwaite, improved 7.5p to 797p and Cobham, meeting Henderson today, held at 584.5p. Ladbrokes, ahead of a trading update, centred 2.5p higher to 195p. Mercury Asset Management, the fund manager, gained 35p to a 1.163.5p peak on talk of corporate activity.

Boardroom changes at luxury goods group Ronson left the shares down 3p to 21.5p and M&S, the on-line information group, fell 7p to 175.5p on talk of a one-for-eight rights issue at 190p.

Insurance group Wellington returned at 142p, against a 121p suspension.

Alpha Airports, the in-flight caterer and airport services group, rose 8.5p to 113p in busy trading, prompting speculation Mohamed Al Fayed had increased his stake. Last week the Harrods chief acquired 25 per cent from Granada, paying 125p a share. He is thought to want to expand Harrods' activities through Alpha and is probably moving his interest to 39.9 per cent. A link with BAA is considered likely.

Ropner, the engineering and shipping group, has emerged as the target for Jacobs which has built a near-10 per cent stake. Takeover talks are taking place. Scruttons, the ferry and security group, could be pulled into any deal with Ropner owning 29 per cent of its capital. Ropner gained 6p to 107p. Jacobs eased to 71p and Scruttons held at 290p.

Alcoholic Beverages

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Banks, Merchant

Stock	Price	Change
Barclays	140.00	0.00
Bank of Scotland	140.00	0.00
Bank of Ireland	140.00	0.00
Bank of London	140.00	0.00
Bank of Montreal	140.00	0.00
Bank of New York	140.00	0.00
Bank of Paris	140.00	0.00
Bank of Spain	140.00	0.00
Bank of Sweden	140.00	0.00
Bank of Switzerland	140.00	0.00
Bank of Tokyo	140.00	0.00
Bank of West	140.00	0.00
Bank of America	140.00	0.00
Bank of Canada	140.00	0.00
Bank of China	140.00	0.00
Bank of India	140.00	0.00
Bank of Japan	140.00	0.00
Bank of Korea	140.00	0.00
Bank of Russia	140.00	0.00
Bank of South Africa	140.00	0.00
Bank of Thailand	140.00	0.00
Bank of Vietnam	140.00	0.00
Bank of Yugoslavia	140.00	0.00
Bank of Zimbabwe	140.00	0.00

Banks, Retail

Stock	Price	Change
Barclays	140.00	0.00
Bank of Scotland	140.00	0.00
Bank of Ireland	140.00	0.00
Bank of London	140.00	0.00
Bank of Montreal	140.00	0.00
Bank of New York	140.00	0.00
Bank of Paris	140.00	0.00
Bank of Spain	140.00	0.00
Bank of Sweden	140.00	0.00
Bank of Switzerland	140.00	0.00
Bank of Tokyo	140.00	0.00
Bank of West	140.00	0.00
Bank of America	140.00	0.00
Bank of Canada	140.00	0.00
Bank of China	140.00	0.00
Bank of India	140.00	0.00
Bank of Japan	140.00	0.00
Bank of Korea	140.00	0.00
Bank of Russia	140.00	0.00
Bank of South Africa	140.00	0.00
Bank of Thailand	140.00	0.00
Bank of Vietnam	140.00	0.00
Bank of Yugoslavia	140.00	0.00
Bank of Zimbabwe	140.00	0.00

Breweries, Pubs & Rest

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Building Construction

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Building Materials

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Chemicals

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Distributors

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Electricity

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Engineering

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Engineering Vehicles

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Extractive Industries

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Food Manufacturers

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Food Products

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Health Care

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Household Goods

Stock	Price	Change
Adnoca	140.00	0.00
Beck's	140.00	0.00
Carlsberg	140.00	0.00
Heineken	140.00	0.00
Interbrew	140.00	0.00
Kaiser	140.00	0.00
Miller	140.00	0.00
Orkla	140.00	0.00
Reckitt	140.00	0.00
Tenneco	140.00	0.00
Unilever	140.00	0.00
Wm. S. & Co.	140.00	0.00
Yneng	140.00	0.00

Investment Companies

Stock

Land Securities offers little to excite

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Land Securities' figures yesterday underscored how eccentric stock markets can be. Shares in Britain's biggest landlord raced ahead on the publication of interim figures pretty much in line with analysts' expectations, leaving those very same analysts wondering what all the excitement was about.

They were quick to point out that the outlook for Land Securities has not improved, making it hard to see why the shares were building on the 10 per cent outperformance against the rest of the market seen so far this year. Stripping out the results of selling investment properties, pre-tax profits fell to £115.5m from £118.2m. Proceeds of £161m were received on the sale of properties, resulting in a profit of £13.4m over financial year-end valuations. The most significant deal involved the sale in August of Land Securities' flagship London building at 33 Grosvenor Place for £130m to a German investment fund.

Land Securities explained the pre-tax shortfall on the effects of financing the development programme – interest incurred as part of the cost of carrying out the development programme is not capitalised.

Expenditure on properties, expected to peak in the second half, reached £108m during the period, of which almost £80m related to developments and refurbishments.

Work has been completed at 25 Victoria Street in central London, on shopping centres in Livingston and Walsend and on several retail developments. Large shopping schemes are also planned in Canterbury, York and Sunderland.

Of more concern is the pedestrian growth in rental income, the lifeblood of any property company. In Land Securities case, this rose by a sub-inflationary 1.5 per cent to £214.3m.

With the shares, up 7.5p to 726p, trading well above the last published net asset value figure, investors are anticipating robust growth in rental income, of which there is precious little sign.

Although occupational and investment demand in the property market have improved as confidence in the economy has returned, Sir Peter Hunt, the chairman, describes rental growth as "patchy".

Like other property companies, Land Securities is seeing some rental growth in certain parts of the market such as retail warehouses, out-of-town shopping centres and regional shopping malls. But Sir Peter warns that rental income growth is slow and will be nothing like what was experienced in the 1980s. For good measure, Sir Peter's cautious tone is backed up by a paltry 3.5 per cent increase in the dividend

Hambros faces uphill struggle

A year of restructuring and the arrival on the share register of Regent Pacific, an upstart Hong Kong vulture fund demanding a break-up, have done nothing for Hambros' reputation in the City. The merchant bank's "beautifully decorated" board yesterday reported a return to the black for the half-year to September and was rewarded with a 7.5p fall in the share price to 345p.

It is not difficult to see why Hambros irritates analysts. Most of the swing in the interim results from losses of £7.7m to profits of £35m came not from trading but from arguably one-off items. The group reorganisation threw up exceptional costs of £2.9m, down from £8.8m before, while bad debts in the bank fell from £23.5m to £5.9m.

Much of the rest of the increase came from areas nominally not under the group's control. Both the quoted subsidiaries saw sharp upturns in profitability, with Hambro Insurance Services rising 30 per cent to £4.5m and Hambro Countrywide, the estate agency, back in the black for only the second time since 1988, with profits of £10.5m replacing losses of £5.8m.

Even in the parts of Hambros where management is supposed to deploy its expertise, the half-year figures present a mixed picture. The group's investment portfolio threw up a profit of £20.4m, against £13.2m last time, mostly from disposals. But these profits are volatile and Hambros was warning yesterday not to expect a repeat of that performance in the second half.

Which leaves the bank itself. Much of the reorganisation has been concentrated here as part of a new strategy of reducing risky and low-margin lending and replacing it with higher "added value" services. But this is going to be a long haul and analysts were pointing disparagingly at the 7 per cent return on net assets of £298m.

Hambros faces an uphill struggle to convince the City that Regent's criticisms

of the management are misguided. It will not be helped by news that current chief executive Sir "Chips" Keswick is to take on the chairman's role next year. Profits of, say, £70m this year would put the shares on a forward multiple of 17. Hold to see what Regent can do, but investors should not hold their breath.

The pub chain with no theme

Pub chains have been one of the easiest ways to make money so far in the 1990s, both for those lucky or astute enough to set them up and flog them on to the majors and for other shareholders who have ridden the wave. Discovery Inns, yet another product of the 1989 beer orders, is the latest to jump on the bandwagon – after pricing in early December, the shares should be trading by Christmas.

Discovery is slightly difficult to categorise, positioned halfway between the managed themed chains such as Wetherspoon and Tom Copleigh and the groups of tenanted pubs run by the likes of Enterprise and Century. With 45 managed pubs – all maintaining their own character, not a centrally determined theme – and 234 tenanted outlets, Discovery is a bit of both and will presumably be priced as such.

Set up in 1992 as a vehicle to acquire 223 pubs from Whitbread in England and South Wales, the chain has been added to subsequently with purchases from Marston and Allied Domecq. The focus is now expected to be on expanding the relatively small managed portfolio, but the cash-generative tenanted pubs will remain as a 200-strong core to help fund expansion of the other leg.

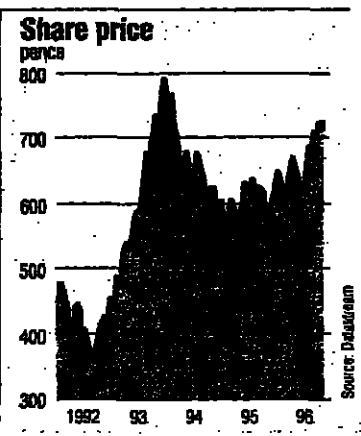
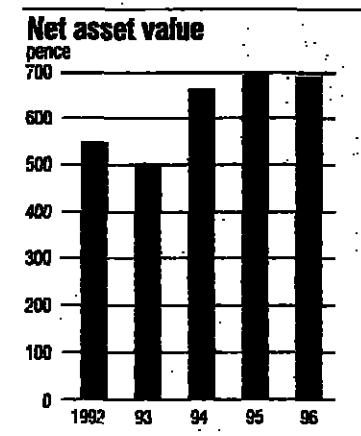
After the proposed exit of the original venture capital backers, led by Kleinwort Benson, Discovery is pitching itself to investors (who are frankly beginning to have had their fill of pub chains) as a non-fashion-led, traditional chain of pubs, designed not to need regular refurbishments and so generate a decent return on capital. It is a commendable resistance to the relentless trivialising of the country's pubs and for that, if nothing else, deserves support.

For less sentimental reasons, Discovery looks likely to be a reasonable bet. Operating profits have grown smartly from 1994's £2.35m to the £5.11m achieved in the year to September and the board has a wealth of experience gleaned from years at Devenish and Courage. All will depend on how ambitious the pricing is next month.

Land Securities: at a glance

Market value: £3.7bn, share price 726p

Trading record	1994	1995	1996	1995	1996
Gross property income (£m)	440	460	462	228	233
Pre-tax profits (£m)	237	245	238	118	129
Earnings per share (pence)	35.2	34.6	33.9	16.8	16.2
Dividends per share (pence)	24.0	25.0	26.0	7.1	7.4



Rates on the way up, says CU

Magnus Grimond

Commercial Union yesterday added its voice to those suggesting UK insurance rates were set to turn up. Peter Foster, finance director, said they had yet to push through any rating increases, but had not reduced rates by as much as other insurers when prices were falling. The next move from CU on rates would probably be upward, he forecast.

The group is also sanguine about the effects of the announcement on Tuesday that AXA and UAP of France are to merge to create the world's second-biggest insurance group.

Tony Wyand, director in charge of European operations, said: "We see [the union] in a fairly positive light." AXA would help make the market more focused on shareholder return, which would benefit Commercial Union, he said.

The comments came as the life and general insurer announced that operating profits had slid from £384m to £348m in the nine months to September. The figures continued to be dragged lower by weather-related claims from the first half, which rose by £62m and more than offset stronger results from the life insurance business.

UK profits slumped from

£244m to £161m in the period. First-quarter winter storms and claims from terrorist bombings compounded domestic problems caused by competition. CU had to fork out £17m in weather claims, £7m following the IRA bombing in Manchester's city centre and £2m for the bomb in London's Docklands.

General insurance premium income fell 2 per cent, but there are now glimmers of hope in the UK. CU said: "The rating environment remains competitive, although there are signs of competition reducing in the motor classes."

Life profit rose 11 per cent to £178m, boosted by CU's French

operations and a reorganised Dutch business. Life premiums climbed 6.4 per cent to £2.8bn, with Poland more than doubling its premium income and Italy posting a 37.5 per cent increase. Insurance premiums from the life business now provide 43 per cent of the group's total premium income.

"The results show the virtue of having a good spread of businesses," said Trevor May, an analyst at Salomon Brothers. "In the UK, the premium income line is still weak. They're deliberately losing exposure and becoming an increasingly smaller operation."

The shares rose 6p to 645p.

IN BRIEF

• **Fenner**, the engineering group, recorded lower pre-tax profits of £12.4m in the year to August due to restructuring charges and a loss on disposals of £7m. The company said the disposal of non-core activities was now complete and had generated proceeds of £2.4m. The move to consolidate the polymer moulding business in Wales is continuing, though the benefits will not be felt until 1998.

• **Borthwick's**, the natural flavours company, saw pre-tax profits halve to £652,000 in the six months to September due to de-stocking in the beverage and ice-cream sectors and lower sales of beef flavours due to BSE concerns. Sales in Borthwick's American flavours business were down 15 per cent due to the loss of two accounts. Group sales were 6 per cent lower at £17.3m.

• **Morgan Crucible** is paying \$26.8m for EM Corporation, a subsidiary of Great Lakes Chemical Corporation. EM manufactures and supplies a range of dry film lubricants, principally for the aerospace industry.

• **BTR** is to establish a joint venture in India to manufacture electric motors and compact geared motors for the Indian and South-east Asian markets. The partnership has been formed with Indian company Crompton Greaves. With an initial investment of £10m, the company will build a factory in India which will start manufacturing by mid-1997. By the end of the decade, the plant is forecast to produce more than 200,000 motors a year.

• **Volex**, the cable assemblies company, increased profits by 23 per cent to £6.5m in the six months to September. Volex is building a manufacturing site in San Diego, California, which will create 100 jobs. Group sales were 4 per cent higher at £85.5m.

Company Results

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
All Leisure (P)	92.4m (85.3m)	5.03m (4.21m)	10.2p (8.7p)	3.47p (-)
Borthwick's (P)	16.3m (17.3m)	0.65m (1.26m)	0.78p (1.75p)	0.59p (0.59p)
Commercial Union (P)	- (-)	457m (441m)	33.7p (40.7p)	nil (nil)
James Dicks (P)	34.4m (20.8m)	1.99m (2.03m)	15p (20.0p)	3.85p (-)
Fenner (P)	299m (225m)	12.47m (13.1m)	5.99p (10.21p)	3.30p (3.0p)
Harman (P)	- (-)	25m (7.7m)	7.2p (19.9p)	2.5p (2.5p)
Land Securities (P)	- (-)	129.9m (118.1m)	18.44p (16.49p)	7.35p (7.1p)
Marshall's (P)	136.3m (135.9m)	13.7m (16.4m)	6.37p (7.73p)	1.5p (1.5p)
M&S Resources (P)	2.81m (16.41m)	-9.38m (0.17m)	-4.8p (-4.1p)	nil (nil)
Sandwich (P)	- (-)	80.4m (76.5m)	53.6p (55.9p)	nil (nil)
Sainsbury (P)	75.6m (126.3m)	0.71m (1.71m)	1.7p (nil)	nil (nil)
Volex (P)	85.5m (82.3m)	6.5m (5.2m)	15.2p (12.4p)	7.35p (7.0p)
Wills & Tait (P)	- (-)	88.2m (75.3m)	13.2p (11.2p)	1.89p (-)
Young & Co (P)	38m (37.5m)	2.48m (2.57m)	12.65p (13.11p)	7.25p (7.25p)

(P) - Profit (M) - Margin (N) - New market

£8m shake-up at Willis to improve profits

Magnus Grimond

Willis Corroon, the insurance broking group, yesterday revealed a further step in the reorganisation of its business with the announcement of an £8.2m charge to cover profit improvement measures.

Unveiling a 17 per cent rise in nine-month profits, the chairman, John Reeve, said: "The action the group has been taking to re-focus on its core businesses has achieved the objectives of improving profitability and strengthening the balance sheet, essential precursors to the next phase of the group's strategic development."

The programme of change at the group would include several immediate profit improvement measures, he said. The cost of which will be taken in the full-year figures and is likely to be around the same level as the £8.2m profit commission received from the group's Lloyd's members' agency so far this year.

The group said it would continue to seek growth opportunities, but reiterated its view that it saw no need to join with another group to combat competitive insurance markets.

Mr Reeve said brokerage and fees had risen 2 per cent in the year to date, at constant exchange rates, reflecting higher business volumes, particularly in the UK and North American retail and global reinsurance operations. Tight control of costs led to increased margins.

Nearly a third of its expected dollar earnings for next year are hedged at \$1.50 to the pound, the group said, which will go some way to offsetting the recent strength of sterling.

Although the figures were better than expectations, the shares managed a rise of just 0.5p to 129.5p yesterday.

British Steel shifts computer jobs to IBM

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

British Steel is to move its computing workforce of 600 staff to new jobs with IBM in a 10-year deal worth £250m, believed to be the biggest computer outsourcing agreement so far in the UK. It is also the largest ever in Britain by the US computer giant.

From next February the British Steel employees will transfer to contracts with IBM, which has already signed recent outsourcing deals with several big British companies, including Thorn, Legal & General and a £65m contract with Sun Alliance signed at the end of last year.

The changes will affect workers in British Steel's computer departments across the UK and will include all administrative, payroll and personnel functions and supply and purchasing information with the group's customers. They cover a variety of job grades and salaries.

Some 120 staff are affected in Port Talbot and 150 on Teeside, with others in data centres at Wednesbury in the West Midlands, Blackburn and Scunthorpe. Computer staff involved in manufacturing software roles will stay with British Steel.

In such outsourcing arrangements the workers involved will stay in the same posts in the same offices but work for the computer company, British Steel, headed by Sir Brian Moffat, declined to reveal how much money it would save as a result of the deal, or whether any of the 600 workers involved would lose their jobs. They will be covered by employment law, which means IBM must continue with previous wage and pension agreements.

A spokesman for British Steel also declined to reveal how much money the company would save as a result of its link-up with IBM. The workers affected currently use 7,000 desktop terminals and net-



Sir Brian Moffat: The British Steel chief has done a deal with IBM worth £250m and involving 600 staff

worked systems, some of which will be updated as a result.

Earlier this year British Steel outsourced 300 staff, mostly based in Rotherham, involved in its central management services division responsible for other administrative work. The deal, worth an estimated £100m, was with the computer group Cap Gemini, formerly called Hoskyns.

The new agreement with IBM is a clear success for the computer group, which had been criticised for failing to ex-

plot outsourcing opportunities with British firms. It is thought that the US group beat off competition from Cap Gemini and EDS.

IBM has so far taken on 10,000 staff worldwide in outsourcing arrangements, including an estimated 1,000 in the UK.

The deal with British Steel does not involve IBM hardware such as personal computers. The British firm currently uses systems made by several different contractors, including ICL of the UK.

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business

Will Asia's hunger for growth leave the world starving?

The past year has seen a dramatic rise in international grain prices and a drop in world grain stocks to near-record low levels. Together with projections of massive grain imports by China in the 21st century, by Lester Brown's Worldwatch Institute, this has raised concerns about the long-term prospects for the world food situation. These thoughts are in the minds of the heads of state and agricultural ministers meeting now in Rome for the first world food summit since the mid-1970s.

Will the rapid industrialisation of densely populated East Asia make people in poorer countries more hungry? China alone, with 22 per cent of the world's population but only 7 per cent of its land area, is expected to need to import half its grain needs by 2030. That would represent a doubling in current world grain trade. What if India's economic reforms were to have similar consequences?

These questions are like those that concerned Thomas Malthus in the mid-19th century and writers in the early 1970s such as the Club of Rome (in *Limbo to Growth*) and Paul Erlich (in *The Population Bomb*). Malthusians make good headlines, but they have so far been proved spectacularly wrong in their predictions.

The clearest indicators of that are food availability and the relative price of food in international markets. Today's 5.7 billion people have 18 per cent more food per person than the world's 3 billion people three decades ago. And if the world's demand for food were growing faster than its supply, real food prices would have been rising over time. But in fact they have been falling slightly.

According to the World Bank data in the graph, the trend decline in the price of food relative to industrial products has averaged about 0.5 per cent per year. The bank expects

more of the same in the foreseeable future, as food supply growth outstrips the growth in demand.

Of course, such projections incorporate many assumptions about future developments in the world economy. So what happens to food price projections when plausible alternative scenarios replace some of those assumptions?

New research* addressing this question first projects the world economy forward a decade, assuming that no commitments on food trade are included in the recently completed Uruguay Round of trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). That base case predicts a continuation of the slight decline in international food prices.

The study's first alternative scenario is one in which the Uruguay Round is fully implemented by 2005 as scheduled. Alternative assumptions are then added to see how much difference they can make to the projected prices.

Contrary to some earlier studies and the fears of many food-importing developing countries, the results suggest implementing the Uruguay Round in itself will have almost no impact on real international food prices. They are projected to be only 2 to 4 per cent higher than they otherwise would be in a decade's time.

There are two main reasons why the effect is so small. One is that, on close inspection, the agricultural commitments under the Round by the most farm protectionist countries are modest.

The other reason is that many markets for non-farm products are to be liberalised under the Uruguay Round. As a result, their prices will rise in international markets



Kym Anderson
China alone, with 22 per cent of the world's population but only 7 per cent of its land area, is expected to import half its grain needs by 2030

as well. This moderates the increase in farm relative to non-farm prices – and it is these relative prices that influence the decisions of producers and consumers.

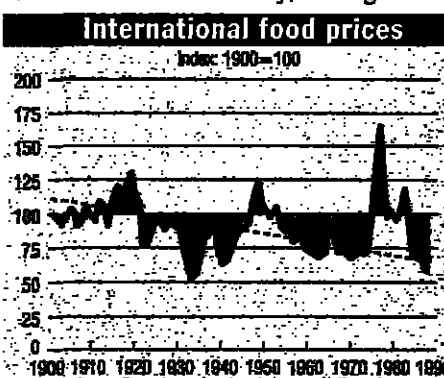
The next step was to see what difference it would make if China and Taiwan join the WTO. Potentially, a huge

amount. Increases in international grain prices would be twice as large with China participating, and livestock product prices would be 40 per cent higher. China would import 4 per cent instead of just 1 per cent of its grain needs by 2005. Total world trade would be 13 per cent instead of just 10 per cent greater.

Furthermore, these results are at the bottom of the likely range, because they ignore the inducements to domestic and foreign investment that would accompany trade liberalisation. Should these investments boost China's industrial productivity to the extent of causing its economy to grow 25 per cent faster, for example, the gains from its accession to the WTO would be as much as four times greater. And China's dependence on grain imports would increase by about twice as much.

There is, however, a risk that advanced industrial countries will not deliver all their promised reform to textile and clothing markets. Should there be such backsliding on reform, a great deal of the projected gains from the Uruguay Round and China's WTO accession would evaporate, industrialisation in Asia's dynamic economies would slow, and the growth in their demand for food imports (and hence the rise in world food prices) would be less.

While net food exporters such as North America and Australasia would be harmed by such a slowdown in Asia's food import demand, might that not be welcome news for poorer food-importing countries in Africa and elsewhere? The answer is no, not least because that dampening of international food prices would be a symptom of a slow or growing world economy which would



Saracens show their new colours for BZW

PEOPLE & BUSINESS



Michael Lynagh: Leading the Saracens into battle

BZW has plunged into the muddy world of professional rugby by sponsoring Saracens this Sunday against the touring Queensland State of Australia.

The north London team will not be called Saracens, but Michael Lynagh's XV, as the former Australian captain leads his Sarries teammates, including Kyran Bracken and Phillippe Sella, in a unique game. For the first time in the club's 100-year history, the players will not appear in their own strip, but in BZW blue and white colours designed for the occasion.

The BZW logo will appear on the front and sides of the shirts, as well as the shorts, in any case anyone didn't get the message.

The sponsorship is the brain child of Nick Brigstock, chairman of BZW corporate banking, who is an old friend of Nigel Wray, chairman of the Bedford property group and now owner of Saracens.

Mr Brigstock says: "I've known Nigel Wray for 15 years. He wanted sponsorship for the game, and since we're brokers and advisers to Bedford, we were very happy to support him."

Mr Brigstock said the match at Enfield was a one-off. "BZW are not normally sponsors of events."

The former Labour Chancellor and co-founder of the Social Democrats, Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, was in expansive form yesterday at a pre-Budget speech at Mansion House in London.

Lord Jenkins praised the current inmate at Number 11 as a rather good Chancellor. "Clarke has more spunk and willingness to stand up for his beliefs than all the other ministers put together."

The former Chancellor recalled his own experience of pre-Budget "purdah". "Secrecy was more an asset to the Chancellor than to the nation. It enabled him not to tell his Cabinet colleagues what he was doing until it was too late for them to object."

Lord Jenkins's advice for Mr Clarke is "no giveaways, but a touch on the brakes, both fiscal and monetary".

Lord Jenkins is now Chancellor of a different sort, that of Oxford University. As such, he has been closely involved with the project to build a new Oxford business school with a £20m donation from Wafic Said. The donation was rejected by a meeting of dons but may be rescued by a postal vote.

All of which has come too late for *Oxford Today*, the university's magazine. Its Michaelmas issue, which has just arrived, devotes a page to the project. "Major benefactions boost Management Studies". It states that the proposed site is on some playing fields, "which are primarily used by university staff who will be provided with alternative facilities".

An illustration of the proposed building is captioned: "There are likely to be significant changes in the finished plans". If the postal vote is thumbs down, there won't be any plans at all.

Christopher King CBE, chairman-elect of Avon Rubber, is joining BOC's board as a non-executive director. Mr King, 60, spent

35 years with BP and retired as chairman of BP Europe two years ago. He retains a clutch of non-executive directorships with BP and he is a board member of Inspec, the leading French business school in Fontainebleau.

Today around 150 City types will witness a grisly murder. Charismatic tycoon Dr Raymond Black, chief executive of Black Pharmaceuticals, has called an EGM in London to persuade brokers, bankers, analysts and the media to help rescue his crumbling empire.

But the City slickers will watch horrified as Dr Black gets shot, stabbed, strangled and clubbed to death before falling down the biggest staircase in Europe.

Also attending will be co-founder of Black Pharmaceuticals, Professor Peter Plum, who helped diversify the group into Scarlett's Lingerie, Mustard Export, White Hotels and Peacock Interior Design.

It is of course, a scaled-up game of Cuckoo, being held in aid of the charity Children with Leukemia. KPMG Forensic Accounting will be on hand to lend authenticity to the skulduggery. I'll be the one with the lead pipe.

John Willcock

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
USA	1.5522	1.5510	1.5500	100	1.5522	1.5510	1.5500
Canada	2.2037	2.2030	2.2020	100	2.2037	2.2030	2.2020
Germany	2.4900	2.4900	2.4900	100	2.4900	2.4900	2.4900
France	6.4247	6.4247	6.4247	100	6.4247	6.4247	6.4247
Italy	2.0703	2.0703	2.0703	100	2.0703	2.0703	2.0703
Japan	164.83	164.83	164.83	100	164.83	164.83	164.83
UK	1.2988	1.2988	1.2988	100	1.2988	1.2988	1.2988
Belgium	35.148	35.148	35.148	100	35.148	35.148	35.148
Denmark	9.5742	9.5742	9.5742	100	9.5742	9.5742	9.5742
Netherlands	2.7922	2.7922	2.7922	100	2.7922	2.7922	2.7922
Ireland	0.9861	0.9861	0.9861	100	0.9861	0.9861	0.9861
Norway	10.462	10.462	10.462	100	10.462	10.462	10.462
Spain	20.272	20.272	20.272	100	20.272	20.272	20.272
Sweden	13.7595	13.7595	13.7595	100	13.7595	13.7595	13.7595
Switzerland	2.0383	2.0383	2.0383	100	2.0383	2.0383	2.0383
Australia	2.0281	2.0281	2.0281	100	2.0281	2.0281	2.0281
Hong Kong	12.783	12.783	12.783	100	12.783	12.783	12.783
Malaysia	4.739	4.739	4.739	100	4.739	4.739	4.739
New Zealand	2.2270	2.2270	2.2270	100	2.2270	2.2270	2.2270
Saudi Arabia	6.2004	6.2004	6.2004	100	6.2004	6.2004	6.2004
South Africa	2.272	2.272	2.272	100	2.272	2.272	2.272

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount; subtract from spot rate. Rates quoted low to high are at a premium; add to spot rate.

*Other rates quoted as memoranda.

For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0801 333 3033.

Cable cost 30p per minute (cheaper rate) 45p other times.

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	16533	0.0988	Nigeria	131515	0.0000
Australia	17283	0.0527	Pakistan	66.2781	0.0000
Brazil	17034	0.0001	Philippines	43.8228	0.0000
Canada	13727	0.0001	Portugal	251.890	0.0000
Egypt	5.687	0.0001	Qatar	6.0178	0.0000
France	72507	0.0001	Romania	24.0000	0.0000
Germany	264.822	0.0001	South Africa	7.7554	0.0000
Greece	353.142	0.0001	UAE	45.0071	0.0000
India	59.020	0.0001	UAE	60.730	0.0000
Kuwait	0.4944	0.0001			

Interest Rates

UK	Germany	US	Japan
Base 6.00%	Discount 2.50%	Prime 8.75%	Discount 0.50%
France 3.00%	Lombard 4.50%	Discount 5.00%	Discount 2.50%
Italy 1.00%	Prime 4.75%	10-Day Repo 5.25%	Central 3.00%
Discount 7.50%	Discount 5.00%	Spain 1.00%	Switzerland 1.00%
Netherlands 2.50%	Discount 3.25%	Sweden 1.00%	Discount 1.00%
		Repo (Pw) 4.50%	Lombard 4.25%

Bond Yields

Country	yield %	10yr yield %	Country	yield %	10yr yield %
UK	7.1%	7.2%	Netherlands	6.4%	6.1%
US	8.1%	7.1%	Spain	10.0%	10.0%
Japan	5.5%	5.5%	Italy	9.1%	9.1%
Australia	6.6%	6.6%	Belgium	5%	5%
Germany	4.6%	4.6%	Sweden	6%	6%
France	5.1%	4.6%	EU OAT	6%	6%

Money Market Rates

Overnight	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	2.5%	5.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%
Sterling CDs	2.5%	5.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%
Treasury Bills	2.5%	5.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%
EU Linked Dep	2.5%	5.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%

Tourist Rates

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (Dollars)	2.0281	New Zealand (Dollars)	2.2270
Austria (Schillings)	13.7595	Portugal (Escudos)	251.890
Belgium (Francs)	35.148	Spain (Pesetas)	200.000
Canada (Dollars)	2.0281	Switzerland (Francs)	2.0383
Cyprus (Pounds)	0.0001	Turkey (Liras)	0.0001
Denmark (Krone)	9.5742	USA (Dollars)	1.5522
Holland (Gulden)	2.0383		
France (Francs)	6.4247		

Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Estimate	Open
Long Call	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Put	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Call	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Put	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Life FTSE Index Option

Series	Settlement	High/Low	Estimate	Open
Nov	3830	3830	3830	3830
Dec	3830	3830	3830	3830
Jan	3830	3830	3830	3830
Feb	3830	3830	3830	3830

Energy

Contract	Settlement	High/Low	Estimate	Open
Long Call	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long Put	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Call	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short Put	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Commodity Indices

Index	Settlement	High/Low	Estimate	Open
Nov	3830	3830	3830	3830
Dec	3830	3830	3830	3830
Jan	3830	3830	3830	3830
Feb	3830	3830	3830	3830

Latest Unit Trust Prices

Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd	Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd	Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd	Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Japan Sunrise	50.0	398.0	0.0	European	32.24	164.0	0.0	Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street			
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Korea Trust	54.22	58.0	0.0	Europe Star Opps	208.0	223.0	0.0	London 4241 479			
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Portugal	22.22	26.0	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Portugal	22.22	26.0	0.0	Hong Kong	17.25	14.0	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				UK Smaller Cos	67.56	67.0	-0.18	Pacific Growth	22.25	22.50	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Cheney Farm	15.00	15.00	0.0	Securities	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Highland Park	71.54	72.48	0.1	Managed Equity	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
Asia Equity & Low Unit Trusts Ltd				Friends Provident Unit Trusts Managers Ltd				UK Mkt Inc	25.00	25.00	0.0	América	20.0	22.0	0.0
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sport

Most, including the majority in boxing, were convinced Tyson would overwhelm Holyfield and possibly put him in hospital

A good question about Evander Holyfield's quite sensational defeat of Mike Tyson in Las Vegas last week to become a three-times world heavyweight champion is why was he almost completely written off in predictions.

On the basis that anything can happen when heavyweights are in the ring, caution was advised here and there, but most people, including the majority in boxing, were convinced that Tyson would overwhelm the challenger and possibly put him in hospital.

Of 48 reporters, myself included, polled by a Las Vegas newspaper only Ron Borges of the *Boston Globe* made out a case for Holyfield, predicting that he would win in the ninth round. If not spot on, this

brought Borges a great deal of attention.

Borges - he bet \$200 (£125) on Holyfield at 12-1 - unlike some seekers of notoriety I have known, didn't take what is known in the trade as a flier. Importantly, his faith in Holyfield sprang entirely from the application of logic. First, Holyfield's immense will; then the fact that he had knocked over much larger men than Tyson who had not been struck seriously since renewing his career in the ring. Borges also took into account the confidence he sensed when in conversation with the challenger. "The more I thought about it, the more I listened to Holyfield and his people, the more obvious his chances became," Borges said.

I am no less experienced than Borges in these matters but logic led me and many others up a different alley. For example, Mickey Duff, in last week's *Boxing News*, said, "It's an easy fight for Tyson and will last a maximum of four rounds, probably less. There's no contest. It's a complete and total mismatch." Naseem Hamed's trainer, Brendan Ingle, was no less adamant in announcement of a bad night for Holyfield. "Tyson will destroy him," Ingle said. "He'll bash Holyfield up in about two rounds. It won't go past three. There's no way Holyfield can win, not a cat in hell's chance. I just can't see it. Holyfield is made for Tyson."

You can go on and on like this. Some left a little room for doubt -



KEN JONES

"The fight will open our eyes to how Tyson takes a shot," the former featherweight champion, Barry McGuigan, said - but most, including the dozen of trainers, Eddie Futch, who has worked with more heavyweight champions than

any man alive, were unequivocal in their belief that Holyfield would be battered senseless. "I really did feel that Evander was taking an awful chance," Futch admitted.

Why? Well, logic of course. There was Holyfield's age, 34, and the knowledge that he is an artificially enlarged heavyweight who underwent tests for a heart condition in May 1994 after losing the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation titles to Michael Moorer. Since then Holyfield, particularly when struggling to a technical knock-out over the limited Bobby Czyz, had done nothing that argued against the advisability of retirement. As Holyfield was required to visit the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota before being allowed to

challenge Tyson, and at least one member of the Nevada Athletic Commission's medical panel spoke out against the contest, no hope could be held out for the challenger. Taking everything into account, three rounds was the most he could be given.

That the majority of us got it wrong recalls the amazing record that an American boxing writer, the late Bob Walters of *Newsday*, had when going against the odds put up for heavyweight championship bouts. Walters, a former amateur middleweight who once fought an exhibition bout against the great middleweight Tony Zale and drank the most vicious dry martini imaginable, was one of the few to predict a victory for the young braggart

Cassius Clay against Sonny Liston. He correctly forecast the outcome of three contests between Floyd Patterson and Ingemar Johansson as well as George Foreman over Joe Frazier.

Before it became a strain - "if I'm wrong my editors complain and put it down to drinking" - Walters was one of only two writers (the *Sun's* boxing writer, Colin Hart, shares the distinction) to predict that Muhammad Ali would defeat Foreman in Zaire. Typically, instead of returning home in triumph Walters, a terrific newspaperman, went off to report on a famine.

Walters's advice was to always think logically about boxing. Would he, I wonder, have picked Holyfield over Tyson?

Proof that money dulls the passion

Mike Rowbottom analyses the findings of the biggest-ever football supporters' survey

The largest-ever survey of football fans in this country confirms that the habits of those watching the domestic game are evolving in parallel with those changes taking place on the pitch.

The third FA Premier League Fan Survey, released yesterday, gained 20,470 responses to 58,000 questionnaires, of which 17,214 came from season-ticket holders.

Football, on this evidence, still has a crucial importance for many supporters - one in four described it as "one of the most important things in my life". But there is an indication that some of the followers are becoming increasingly semi-detached - passion giving way to leisure.

Among supporters earning £10,000 per year or less, three out of four said football-watching was "one of the most important things in my life". Of those earning £30,000 or more, a small majority described it "just another thing that I do".

The survey also identified a number of better-paid fans who were using a season ticket as a cushion, knowing there would be a press for certain matches. "They may want to see as few as 12 or 13 home games, where they can be sure of seeing Villa or Manchester United," said the report's author, John Williams of the Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football

Research. "It does have the effect of excluding other types of supporters who might have attended on an *ad hoc* basis. Clubs seem to be focusing on a lucrative section of the population," Williams said. "But I have no doubt there is a section of supporters who don't connect with football clubs as their parents did."

Rick Parry, the Premier League's chief executive, acknowledged the "potential danger" of undercutting the fan base. "But," he said, "I don't think clubs will be depressed about their increasing numbers of affluent supporters."

New ticketing and seating arrangements at clubs have affected the naturally occurring social divisions within crowds. Whereas previously those who wanted to let off steam and use bad language might congregate behind the goals, they are now being obliged to sit alongside others for whom such activity was distressing.

Williams pointed out that issues such as bad language were a major concern for many supporters, but that opinion was sharply divided on the topic, with some objecting to it and others complaining that stewards and police interfere too much.

While ruling out the likelihood of establishing "optional offensive language areas", Parry



Plenty to cheer: But is football becoming just a leisure pastime rather than a way of life?

Photograph: Allsport

ry said the Premiership was looking at experimenting with "singing areas". Accompanying band music, of the type Glenn Hoddle is currently trying to encourage on England's behalf, is also seen as a positive option.

This year's figures point to the continuing absence of non-white, ethnic minorities from the ranks of spectators. Although the current national (1991 Census) figure for the population of non-white ethnic minority communities in Britain is just under five per cent, the 1996 sample reports just 1.1 per

cent non-white respondents in all and 0.9 per cent non-white season ticket holders. Arsenal lead the table, but even they only have 2.1 per cent non-white season ticket holders. At the other end of the league come Manchester City, Southampton (both 0.3 per cent), Blackburn (0.2) and Newcastle (0.1).

"Blackburn Rovers seem to attract little local ethnic minority support," the report said. "Despite recent club successes and a substantial (mainly Asian) minority community in the town, while Manchester City

also has a poor return here, especially given the multi-racial nature of the Moss Side area of the city in which the Maine Road ground is located."

"In this last case, poverty rather than ethnicity *per se* may be the stronger barrier to season ticket purchase, though it is also perhaps significant that City and Blackburn were two clubs in the Premier League to have few, or no, black players in their first team squads in 1995/96."

The team of female fans within the game remains, as last year, around one in eight, with

most season-ticket holders being found at Nottingham Forest, Coventry City, Sheffield Wednesday and Wimbledon.

The latter club turn out to have some intriguing characteristics. The Dons appear to be a club which many people adopt, rather than grow up with. They top the list in terms of new fans, who represent nearly 25 per cent of the sample. They also have the highest proportion of season ticket holders who attended university or polytechnic - 38.6 per cent, narrowly ahead of Manchester United.

Beck rues penalty decision

John Beck was left "feeling empty" after his Lincoln City side were denied another Coca-Cola Cup giant-killing by Southampton's second-half fightback at Sincil Bank on Tuesday night.

Beck's Third Division side who knocked out Manchester City in the second round, were given a ninth-minute lead by Gareth Ainsworth and had Southampton in trouble with their direct style. But just when it seemed that the second-half heroics of the Lincoln goalkeeper, Barry Richardson, would secure another famous scalp, Southampton won a 75th-minute penalty and Jim Magilton scored the equaliser.

Lincoln's stubborn resistance began to crumble and the substitute Gordon Watson pounced to put Southampton ahead six minutes from time. Eyal Berkovich, the club's recent signing, added a third in the last minute and Lincoln's Cup run was over leaving Beck to ponder over what might have been.

Beck felt Chris Woods' fingertip save to keep out Olsbert Bos' header five minutes after Ainsworth's opener and Sains' penalty, awarded for a Jason Barnett trip on Egil Ostensadt, had been the major turning points of the tie.

"If we had scored another when we were 1-0 up, and we had a few chances, they might have been dead and buried, but it wasn't to be," Beck said.

"I'm disappointed with the ref's decision on the penalty. It was a very harsh decision and it turned the game. We were keeping them at bay and then suddenly, out of nothing, the penalty got them back in it. It's left me feeling very empty."

Beck's disappointment at the way in which the replay, earned by Lincoln's 2-2 draw at the Dell three weeks ago, had slipped away from his side was tempered by the knowledge that Southampton had been given a rough ride.

"We put the frightenedurs up them," Beck said. "We've done extremely well to get this far and to be disappointed at getting beat by a Premiership club."

"We've had four Cup finals for little Lincoln and there are 23 other Third Division sides who would have loved to have been in our shoes. We're very proud of that."

The Southampton manager, Graeme Souness, felt a mixture of pride and relief at the way his side stuck to their task after losing an early goal and trailing deep into the second-half.

"We didn't panic or change our style," Souness said. "We kept passing it and that's what got us the opportunities to get back into it."

"It would have been a difficult game for anyone coming here but I thought we handled it well."

"The danger, when you play these sort of games, is that you end up playing like them. It was important that we continued trying to pass the ball and we did."

"As the game went on they dropped off a bit and we came into it more. When their keeper saved Matt's (Le Tissier) free-kick I thought 'maybe it's going to be their night' but once we got the first goal I felt we'd go on to win it."

Southampton's victory has earned them another potentially awkward tie away to Oxford United.

McFarland returns with Cambridge

Roy McFarland, the former England international, returned to management yesterday when it was announced that he has taken charge of Cambridge United. McFarland, who was capped 28 times by England, has signed an 18-month contract and is already preparing the Third Division promotion challengers for Saturday's FA Cup first-round tie against Welling.

McFarland had spells in charge of Derby (twice) and Bradford before taking Bolton into the Premiership. He left Burnden Park eight months ago. At Cambridge, he succeeds Tommy Taylor who left the Abbey Stadium to take over at Leyton Orient last week.

Reg Smart, the Cambridge chairman, revealed there were 36 applications for the job. "There were some interesting people among them, but we decided instead to approach three people we thought more suitable. We interviewed them all

yesterday and they were all very impressive. I would recommend the other two whom it wouldn't be right to name to any club, but Roy McFarland stood out as the man for this job," he said.

Mike Newell's troubled career with Birmingham has hit a new low after he was sent-off while making a comeback from injury in the reserves. The former England B international striker, who is on the transfer list at St Andrews after failing to settle following his £775,000 summer move from Blackburn, was dismissed for two bookable offences during Tuesday night's clash with Everton at Highbury.

The Birmingham manager, Trevor Francis, is set to continue his St Andrews clear-out by selling the former Leyton Orient and Plymouth midfielder, Steve Castle, bought by Barnsley for £225,000 in the 1995 close-season. Southend are believed to be interested.

Strike plans recede

The threat of a strike by Nationwide League players is expected to be officially ended today. It is understood the Professional Footballers' Association have agreed a deal with the Football League which gives the union £1.2m a year for five years.

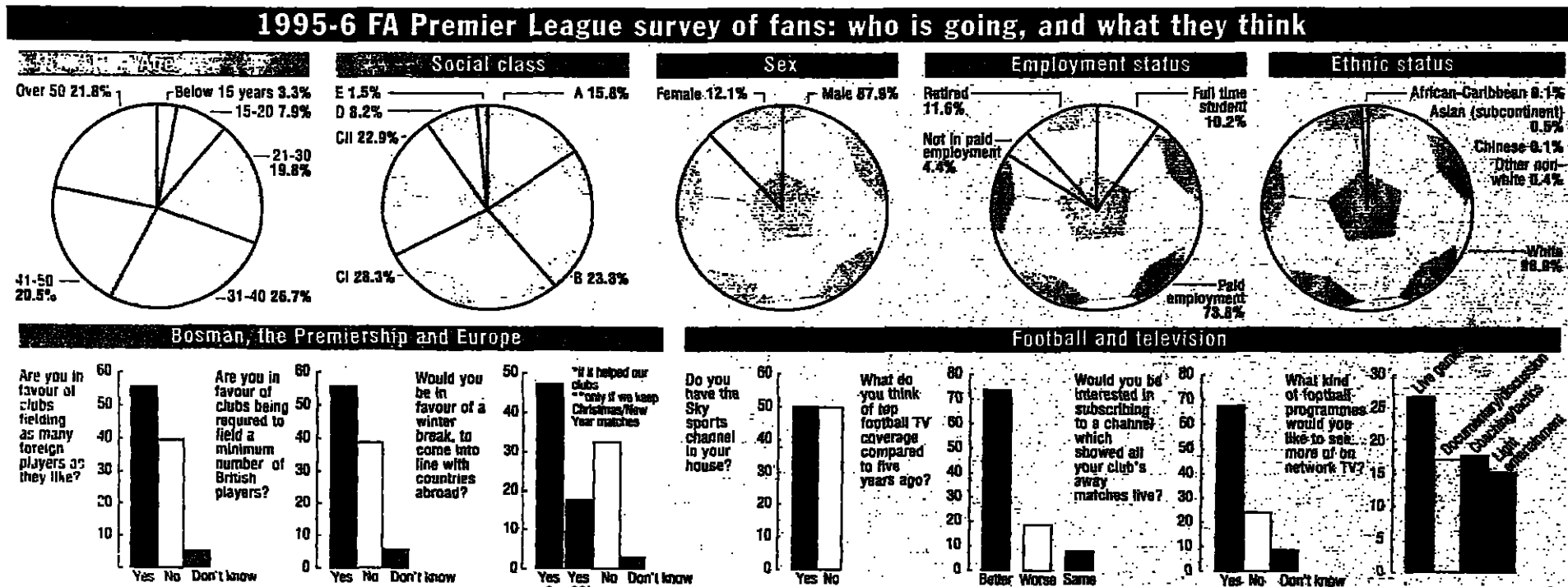
The strike threat loomed in the wake of the League's recent £125m deal with BSkyB, when clubs voted to scrap the long-running tradition of paying the PFA a 10 per cent levy from television screening rights.

The PFA chief executive, Gordon Taylor, initially demanded that the payment be restored, and players at all 72 Nationwide League clubs were balloted on whether they were

willing to take strike action. The result of that ballot - believed to show that the players were overwhelmingly in favour of industrial action - was to be announced on 19 October.

At the last minute, however, Taylor delayed making the results public. That brought the chance of more negotiations, and those have clearly been successful.

In addition to the up-front annual payment - more than doubling last year's £560,000 PFA income figure - it is believed extra funding will be provided to the union for use on mutually agreed projects. But while it is unlikely clubs will rock the boat at this late stage, the deal still has to be ratified today.



Test of Steelmen's mettle is talk of the toon



FA CUP COUNTDOWN

Consett, thankfully, is not quite the town that it once was. It is, however, the town that Kenneth Clarke forgot. It is, however, the town that Kenneth Clarke forgot. It is, however, the town that Kenneth Clarke forgot.

Interviewed by BBC Radio Newcastle while on a fact-finding mission in the North-east last year, the Chancellor picked out the "thriving steelworks at Consett" as a shining example of the region's industrial success. In fact, the last batch of steel was produced in Consett on 6 September, 1980.

The main thrust of the vain fight to avert closure of the British Steel works, and the loss of some 8,000 jobs, was that Consett, 14 miles south of Newcastle in north-west Durham, would become a ghost town. How fitting it is then that evidence that Consett remains alive and as-

surely kicking will be found this Saturday in Nottinghamshire, the same county in which the Chancellor's West Bridgford constituency happens to lie.

Consett AFC, members of the Federation Brewery Northern League, have reached the first round proper of the FA Cup for only the second time in their 97-year history (they were hammered 5-0 at Doncaster in 1958). And their unexpected success has created such a stir Consett could indeed be a ghost town for one day this weekend.

That particular irony is not lost on Colin Carr, PE teacher at the town's Blackfyn Comprehensive and Consett's manager. Carr, who spent his playing days as a centre-half in the Wearside League with Annfield Plain, has become accustomed to home crowds barely touching the 100 mark; by all accounts there could be 10

times that many locals following the Steelmen, as they are still nicknamed, to Mansfield's Field Mill ground on Saturday.

"We used to get more," Carr said, "until Newcastle started doing well. I'm only talking about maybe 20 or 30 people but for a little club like us that makes a big difference."

The gates go down again on midweek nights when Newcastle are live on television. Even on Saturdays there are places where you can watch the Norwegian television channel that shows Newcastle matches.

As a lifelong Newcastle fan himself, Carr does not begrudge the black and white polarisation of football viewing in and around his home town. He is merely grateful that support has

been whipped up for a bulging one-off bandwagon.

Stewart Wilkinson openly confesses he is one of the locals jumping on board. His, however, is no ordinary bandwagon. It is the bus that was booked to carry the secretary and his fellow members of the Sunderland Supporters' Association's Consett branch to White Hart Lane on Saturday.

"We're even taking Newcastle supporters," he said. "They're selling their season tickets for their home match on Saturday to come to Mansfield instead."

"It's a case of the community rallying round to see our local team in the FA Cup. I know how hard the backroom staff at Consett have worked to keep the club afloat with no spon-

sorship. This is their day. They deserve all the credit and support they get."

That Consett are a club in need of financial support is evident from even a cursory glance at the crumbling red-brick facade of Belle Vue Park, an inappropriately named home if ever there was one. Unfit to stage any replay (that will be at Durham City, if required), it could be described as one of those non-League outposts that time forgot.

The football club are still suffering from the loss of the town's former industrial giant. As Carr explained: "Each person who worked at the steelworks had an old sumpence deducted from their pay to help the football club. Eight thousand sumpences is a lot of money. Since then, we've struggled from week to week to make ends meet."

One product of the club in those financially solid days made it all the way from Belle Vue to Wembley. Peter Noble was Swindon's No 10 the afternoon the Robins rocked Arsenal in the 1969 League Cup final.

Win, lose or draw at Mansfield, the present-day Consett party have worked wonders to get this far. Boasting just one player with Football League experience, the Darlington old boy Mark Outterside, they have seen off higher-ranking non-League opponents, in Bishop Auckland and Gateshead, in the last two rounds.

And, Mansfield might care to note: the steady Consett defence have conceded just one goal in the eight matches they have played since setting out on the Wembley road in the preliminary round at St James' Park in August. St James' Park, Alnwick, that is.

Not life or death
Survey reveals changing
priorities of fans, page 26

sport

Rusedski's advance
Britain's No 2 given a
scare, page 27

£3m 'British Bulldog' eyed by Rangers

Football
ALAN NIXON

The Chilean striker Sebastian Rozental, who goes by the nickname of "the British Bulldog", could be on his way from Santiago to Glasgow for £3m and a new career in Scottish football with Rangers.

Walter Smith and his assistant, Archie Knox, met the 20-year-old from Universidad Catolica in Santiago after he impressed in a World Cup qualifier against Uruguay on Tuesday night.

Rozental should be able to obtain a work permit as he plans to apply for British citizenship through his English grandparents. He speaks perfect Eng-

lish and has turned down approaches from Italy because he wants to play in Britain.

Rozental has asked for a four-year contract and Rangers have tabled their offer, which falls short of the player's £4m valuation but should still be enough to prise him from South America.

Middlesbrough's embarrassment over the intentions and whereabouts of Emerson increased yesterday when the supposedly disenchanted Brazilian midfielder failed to return to Teesside after the Premiership break.

The club put on a brave face, insisting that the £4m summer signing would be back in Middlesbrough after his Brazil holiday in time for training today.

"We arranged Emerson's flight back from Brazil and are confident he will be here," Dave Allan, a club spokesman said.

The Boro manager, Bryan Robson, who returned yesterday from a holiday in Tenerife, could only state the obvious - that Emerson must honour his four-year contract.

"I have to speak to a few people about newspaper reports. I want to find out what is the truth and what is not," he said. "Emerson will not be leaving the club. In fact no one is leaving unless I decide it is in our best interests. I have the full backing of the chairman over this."

He then went on to dismiss speculation of a bid by Barcelona for Emerson.

"Bobby Robson has not contacted me from Barcelona or left messages," he said. "If Bobby wanted one of my players he would contact me direct. I know Bobby well from our England days. He is not the type to go behind my back."

"There has been a lot of speculation on my players in newspapers and I want to get behind it all. I want to know the truth and what is not the truth."

Jamie Pollock is heading back to England after his move from Middlesbrough to Osasuna collapsed. A series of problems has left him without pay for more than a month and kicking his heels. Pollock is now likely to be heading for Bolton, who are discussing a deal with both Osasuna and Middlesbrough that could work out at around £400,000.

Tomas Brodin's loan move from Leeds to Sampdoria until the end of the season has faltered because of doubts over the Swede's fitness. The Serie A club's doctors have ruled Brodin's ankle injury is too serious for any move to go ahead in the near future.

Sky in pay-per-view talks, page 20

Bosnich hopes for lenient treatment

Mark Bosnich will be hoping that a Football Association disciplinary commission view his Hitler-style salute in the spirit he says it was intended. The Aston Villa goalkeeper will appear before the three-man commission tomorrow morning at Lancaster Gate charged with misconduct for his gesture towards Tottenham fans in the second half of the game at White Hart Lane last month.

The FA could accept Bosnich's explanation that his salute, which upset Tottenham supporters many of whom are Jewish, was just a silly misguided prank and give the Australian a gentle rap over the knuckles and a "don't do it again" warning. Alternatively, the commission may feel that they need to make an example of a situation which in terms of the worst scenario could have provoked crowd trouble and hand out a heavy fine or even suspension.

In the meantime, whatever the outcome of the hearing, Bosnich must wait to see if the police, who received complaints from Tottenham fans over the incident, are to take action after a report was submitted last week to the Crown Prosecution Service. A police spokesperson did admit that it could be several weeks before it is known whether the Crown Prosecution Service will decide to press charges.

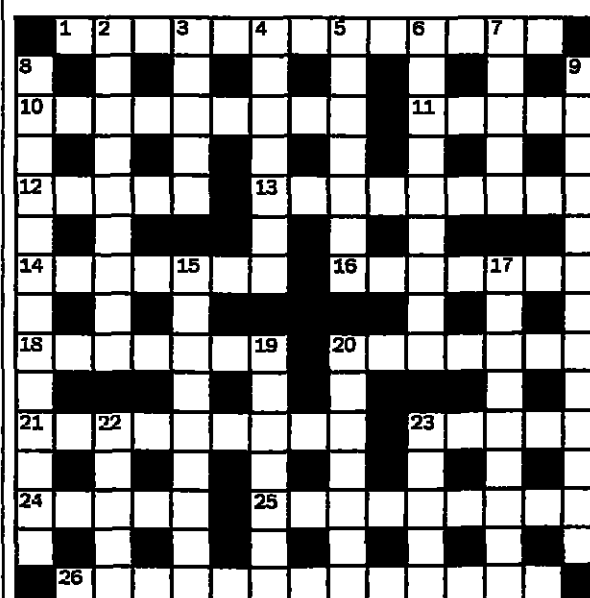
Portsmouth's manager, Terry Fenwick, was yesterday fined £500 by the FA after admitting his part in a verbal attack on the referee Martin Bodenham. Fenwick spoke to the Cornwall-based Bodenham in the Fratton Park tunnel after his team drew 1-1 with Wimbledon to go out of the Coca-Cola Cup in September. Fenwick offered a plea in mitigation, but in addition to the fine was warned about his future conduct.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3144, Thursday 14 November

By Phil

Wednesday's Solution

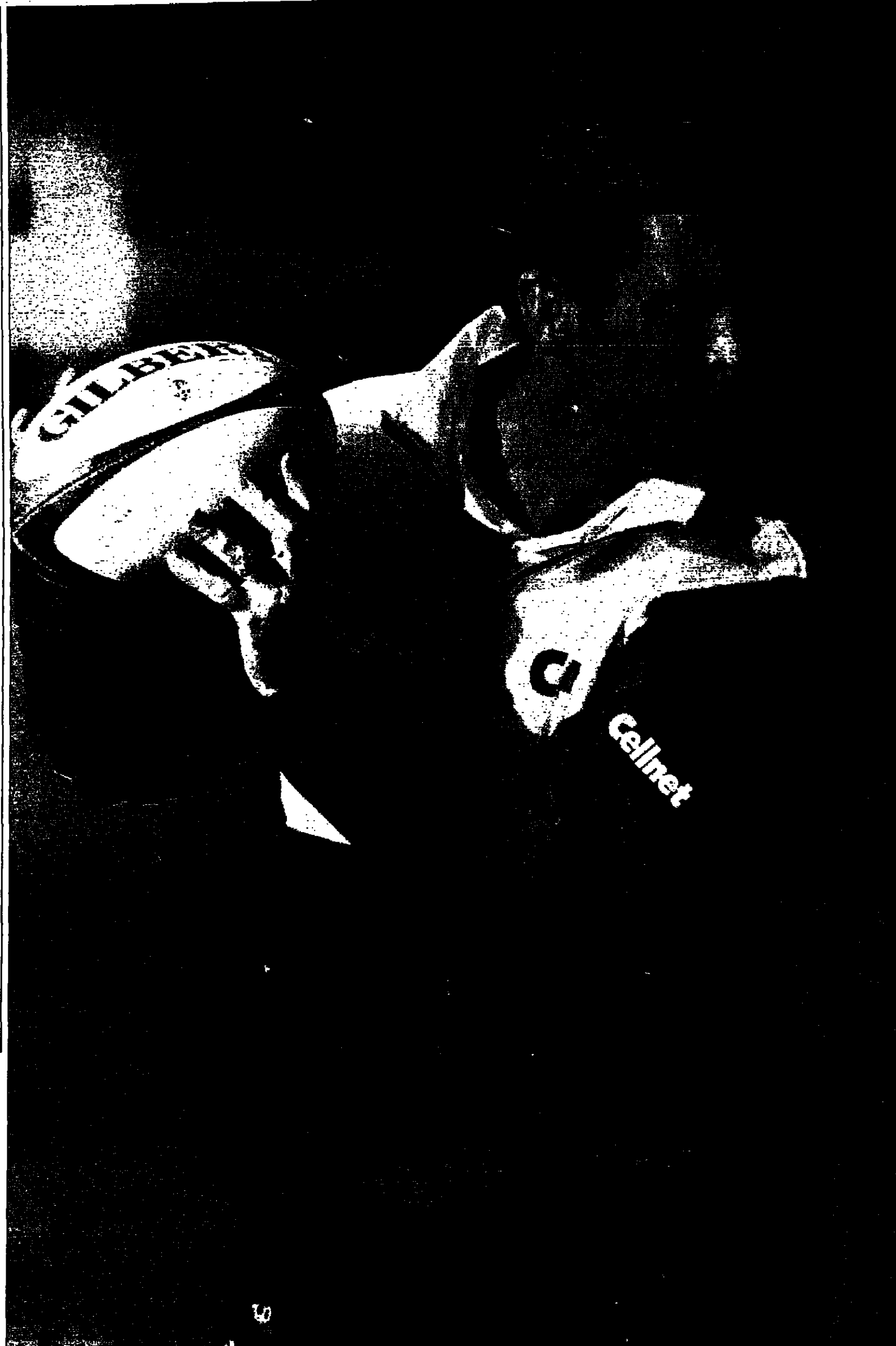


SEDATE PLACID
H N E E A E
EVOICABLE BACKUP
H W R I F E O
BOWLING ALVES
H S R S E
DISTRUST FACIT
I P R O
SHEAR HAUNTING
U T U
ORION SHARPOUT
R I E T N O U A
OPERAS STEWARDS
S L I A I S K
ENDURE GLANCE

- ACROSS**
- Place for cutting and getting first slice of bread with jam - Henry's tucking in! (8-5)
 - Me, with lump pulsing, directed to be beaten (9)
 - Majority around island affected by water (5)
 - Right, I'm breaking into church - producing this? (5)
 - It's a singular deluge that's this scrappy! (3-3-3)
 - Casual attack in which drug's stolen (3, 4)
 - A Mahler broadcast from a Dutch town (7)
 - Girl heading off to embrace the men in the country (7)
 - Exotic set of instruments - something played, by the way (not English) (7)
 - Non-existent meat? (4, 5)
 - Name adopted by girls resorting in colloquial speech (5)

- Gum concealed by dentures - ingenious! (5)
- Store of ammunition - it's abandoned by brigand or thrown around position on ground (9)
- Item of furniture redesigned at Slumberland (8, 5)
- DOWN
- Clumsy fellow made this ineptly (3-6)
- Annoy woman with exercise (5)
- Wrong - one town closing down yard is wrong (7)
- Buy your own tulips! (2, 5)
- Plant producing yellow ointment? (5, 4)
- Sounded unhappy about journey, we hear (3)
- High-level station - odds on one place where trains arrive? (5, 8)

- More than one theatre worker shows astonishment about a star turning up (5, 8)
- Difficult ship, one refusing to diverge from chosen course (4-5)
- Pronunciation defect in all alto trills (9)
- Girl to show evidence of existence in chronicle (7)
- Good girl and man taken up from Hell (7)
- Be glum, turning up around end of races - here? (5)
- Brief attempt to secure runs (5)



The England captain, Phil de Glanville, practises his handling skills in training at Bisham Abbey yesterday. Photograph: Graham Chadwick/Allsport

Ulster lose exiles for Australian test

Rugby Union

Ulster will be without two of their internationals, Jeremy Davidson and David Humphreys, for their meeting with Australia in Belfast on Saturday. The London Irish duo are both required for their club's crucial Courage League One game against Wasps on the same day.

However, this double blow is partially softened by the recall of the former Scotland A stand-off, Stuart Laing. He has impressed this season with his goal-kicking while playing as a stand-in for Humphreys. Gary Longwell, a seasoned veteran, returns to the second row in place of Davidson and will partner the Irish international Paddy Johns, who has been released by Saracens.

Ulster can call on four other capped players as well as Johns - the centres Mark McCall and Maurice Field, Denis McBride, who at flanker will captain Ulster, and the right wing James Topping, who made his Ireland debut in the shock defeat by Western Samoa on Tuesday night.

Saracens, in the guise of Michael Lynagh's XV, field six internationals for their match against the touring Australian side Queensland at Enfield on Sunday. Lynagh, who was capped 72 times from Queensland and scored a world record 911 points, will lead the Londoners when they face his former state side, Philippe Sella, Kyran Bracken, Tony Daly, Paul Wallace and Tony Copey are also on parade for a game the Saracens coaching director, Mark Evans, views as extremely important.

"When you play a team as good as Queensland, the least you owe them is to put out the strongest available side. It would have been an insult for us to do otherwise," Evans said. "This is possibly the last opportunity for our guys to play together before we get back to league and cup matters."

Queensland's British tour includes fixtures with English divisional sides, concluding on 13

December against England A. France's Patrick Thomas will referee the Heineken European Cup quarter-final between Dax and Toulouse at Parc Municipal des Sports on Saturday. The official, who was in charge of last Saturday's international between Scotland and Australia at Murrayfield, will make it an all-French affair as Toulouse continue their defence of the trophy.

The Welsh referee Clayton Thomas will control the all-England contest between Leicester and Harlequins at Welford Road, with the Irishman Gordon Black officiating the Anglo-Welsh game between

Cardiff and Bath at Cardiff Arms Park.

England's Brian Campsall will be in charge for Sunday's quarter-final at Brive, where Llanelli will be bidding to take the French club's 100 per cent record in the tournament and claim a place in the last four.

Brive are the bookmakers' favourites to win the cup.

The BBC have altered the running order of *Grandstand* on Saturday to include live rugby union with second-half coverage of Leicester v Harlequins quarter-final at 3.45.

ULSTER by Australia, Saturday: R Morris, J Topping, M Field, M McCall, J Cunningham, S Laing, S Macdonald, R Humphreys, S Redwan, S Leslie, G Longwell, P Johns, S Duncan, S Macdonald, D McBride (capt), Replacement: R Potts, A Ford, J Patterson, R Wilson, McCutcheon, N Dink.

De Glanville's pledge, page 27

A BUNCH OF FLOWERS



The MALT



The MACALLAN

IS INSPIRATIONALLY INSPIRED

WITH COSTLY GOLDEN

PROMISE BARLEY TO CREATE

THE TIMELESS MASTERPIECE

THAT IS The MALT

100% من الامال